



Department
for Work &
Pensions

THE RT HON. SIR STEPHEN TIMMS MP
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10 November 2025

Jenny Rathbone MS
Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee
Senedd Cymru
Bae Caerdydd,
Caerdydd
CF99 1SN

Dear Jenny,

Section 3 of the British Sign Language Act 2022

Thank you for your letter dated 16 October 2025 seeking further clarification on the British Sign Language Act 2022 and specifically section 3 which requires the Secretary of State to issue guidance.

The Government is committed to reducing the barriers Deaf people face in their everyday lives. As part of this, it is crucial to make sure that Government communications are as inclusive and accessible as possible, so that everyone has access to important information from the Government and is able to engage on issues that will affect them.

We continue to work across Government departments to improve the number of BSL communications produced, and this year each ministerial department was asked to produce a 5 year plan setting out how they plan to improve the use of BSL. These were [published in July](#), alongside the [third annual BSL report](#).

We also recognise that there is still more to do to ensure that Government departments and organisations improve the experience of Deaf people when they interact with the government.

As you rightly note, section 3 of the BSL Act 2022 requires the Government to issue guidance promoting the facilitation and use of BSL, including:

- advice for relevant departments on best practice to support BSL under both the Equality Act 2010 and BSL Act 2022
- advice on best practice for communicating with BSL users (both when interacting with individuals and when communicating with the general public), including case studies to show the value of providing BSL interpretation in communications with the public

The BSL Advisory Board, a non-statutory board of 17 mainly BSL users, will advise the Government on the guidance detailed in the BSL Act, and how to implement it to deliver the best possible support for the Deaf community. Work to develop the guidance has started. The final version will be published in due course with support from the Cabinet Office's Disability Unit. The BSL Advisory Board, having come to the end of its initial three year term, is in the process of being reappointed, and I envisage that its new membership should be in place by the end of the year. I think its likely that, once it starts meeting, it will set up a sub-group to support this piece of work.

I trust this supports you in your scrutiny of the British Sign Language (Wales) Bill and would welcome further dialogue as the Bill continues its passage through the Senedd.

With all best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Timms', with a horizontal line above the name.

Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms MP
Minister of State for Social Security and Disability