



**Irish Deaf Society**

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2017**

**36th Annual General Meeting**

**At Cabragh Hall, Deaf Village Ireland**

**Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at 11am**

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## Introduction of the Irish Deaf Society

### Mission Statement

The Irish Deaf Society seeks to achieve and promote the Equality and Rights of Deaf people in Ireland. On the grounds of the Irish Constitution and Human Rights and international legislation, the ambition of full access to citizenship and society is sought through the empowerment and mobilisation of the Deaf community. With an awareness of their identity and their rights as individuals, Deaf people in Ireland are enabled to celebrate their culture and continue to ensure the upholding of Irish Sign Language recognition and break down the barriers of discrimination.

### Contact Details

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<b>Registered Company No</b>	321657
<b>Registered Charity No</b>	CHY 8674

## Standing Orders

1. No alcohol or smoking is permitted in this room
2. Only one signer at a time is permitted with a maximum duration of three minutes
3. All signers must address conference from the platform
4. All remarks must be addressed to the Chairperson
5. All members must be seated when the Chairperson is signing
6. No members shall sign more than once on the same subject. However, any member exercising the right to reply may sign a second time for no more than two minutes
7. The Chairperson shall have the discretion to declare any unresolved subject closed
8. Any members willfully disregarding the Chairperson's ruling may be suspended during the remainder of a subject under discussion, or for the whole AGM.
9. A point of order shall be made where the Chairperson rules as follows:
  - a. Incorrect procedures – contrary to Standing Order, e.g. signing longer than allowed.
  - b. Irrelevancy – wandering from the subject.
  - c. Inappropriate language – swearing, personal abuse or other inappropriate remarks.
  - d. Breach of Rules – procedures contrary to that laid down by Standing Order
10. A point of information shall apply where a member calls for
  - a. Clarification of a point raised by a signer
  - b. Provision of additional information
  - c. Correction of a signer on a point of fact
11. Voting on motions and elections shall be made in accordance with the rules laid down by the Constitution
12. The decision of the Chairperson on the matter of procedure is final.

## Board of Directors

<b>Chairperson</b>	Lianne Quigley
<b>Vice Chairperson</b>	Vacant
<b>Honorary Secretary</b>	Micheál Kelliher
<b>Honorary Treasurer</b>	Melissa Howlett
<b>Board of Directors</b>	Wendy Murray Jnr John Bosco Conama Jennifer Lynch James Riordan (resigned November 2017) Colm Finnegan (resigned August 2017) Eugene Phillips (co-opted Sept 2017)

## Staff

<b>Chief Executive Officer (CEO)</b>	Eddie Redmond (part-time April 18)
<b>Personal Assistant to CEO</b>	Louise Sheerin (temporary lay-off Apr 18)
<b>Chartered Public Accountant</b>	Fiona Noone
<b>Account Assistant</b>	Stephanie O'Toole (left Jan 18)
<b>Advocacy Services Manager</b>	Elaine Grehan
<b>Community Resource Officer</b>	Orla Grehan
<b>Advocacy Services Administrator</b>	Alison Harrington
<b>Deaf Adult Literacy Services Manager</b>	Brian Crean
<b>DALS Supervisor</b>	Susan Whelan
<b>ISL Academy Manager</b>	Tracey Treanor
<b>Receptionist</b>	Anna Murphy (left Jan 18)
<b>Fundraising Manager</b>	Janette Byrne (resigned Nov 17)
<b>Fundraising Administrator</b>	Kate Mullin (temporary lay-off April 18) Sharon Walsh (temporary lay-off April 18)

**Charity Shop Supervisors**

Lorraine Cullen (Phibsboro)

Anne Moloney (Ashbourne)

Debra Kerr (Drogheda)

**Shop Assistants**

Lisa O'Neill (Phibsboro)

Noeleen Galvin (Ashbourne)

Jacqueline Rossiter (Drogheda)

**Warehouse Manager**

Mary Esther English

**Van Driver**

Krzysztof Bury

**Van Assistant**

Dara Ryan

## Agenda

1. Standing Order
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. The Minutes of the 35th Annual General Meeting
4. Matters arising
5. Chairperson's Address
6. The 2017 Review
7. Financial Report
8. Elections
9. Motions/Resolutions
10. Any Other Business

## The 35<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

35<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 2pm

Deaf Heritage Centre, Deaf Village Ireland, Cabra, Dublin 7.

### Attendance:

**Acting Chairperson** Lianne Quigley, **Hon. Secretary** Ronan Lowry, **Hon. Treasurer** Melissa Howlett, and **Board Directors** John Bosco Conama, Colm Finnegan.

**Apologies:** **Board Director** Jennifer Lynch

**Minute Taker:** Anna Murphy

**Auditor:** Richard Kendrick

**Interpreters:** Tracey Daly and Cormac Leonard

The Acting Chairperson, **Lianne Quigley** declared the 35<sup>th</sup> AGM open at **2.03pm**

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The IDS AGM Quorum is set at 22 people (17 people currently in attendance). The Chairperson asked members if they wished to delay proceeding with the AGM for 10/15 minutes.

This was proposed and seconded by **Peter Murray** and **Libby Breheny** and passed by a majority vote.

At 2.09pm, the quorum of 22 was reached and the Chairperson proposed to go ahead with the AGM.

This was proposed by, and seconded by **Ronan McDonagh** and **John Giles** and passed by a majority vote.

Please note, by 3.30pm, a peak attendance of 35 was recorded.

### Mission Statement

The Irish Deaf Society as the leading national organisation of the Deaf in Ireland brings equality and human rights to members of the Deaf Community through advocacy and



empowerment as full citizens. It shall be achieved through promotion of Irish Sign Language and its related culture and norms.

## 1. Standing Orders

Standing orders were read out, and proposed and seconded by **Edwina Murray** and **Raymond Grehan** and passed by a majority vote.

### Tellers

**Bernadette Power** was proposed and seconded by **Kevin Lynch** and **Breda Brosnan** and passed by a majority vote.

**Catherine Stuart** was proposed and seconded by **Peter Murray** and **John Giles** and passed by a majority vote.

## 2. Adoption of the Agenda

1. Standing orders
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Minutes of the 33<sup>rd</sup> AGM
4. Matters Arising
5. Chairperson's Address
6. 2014 Review
7. Financial Report
8. CEO report
9. Elections
10. Any Other Business.

The agenda was proposed and seconded by **Graham O'Shea** and **Sandra Kennedy** and passed by a majority vote.

## 3. Minutes of the 34<sup>th</sup> AGM

No queries or comments were made in relation to the minutes of the 2016 AGM.

The minutes of the 34<sup>th</sup> AGM were proposed and seconded by **James Riordan** and **Patricia Pentony** and passed by a majority vote.

#### 4. Matters Arising

1. **Graham O'Shea:** Page 11, 4 "Graham O'Shea asked if there was any update in relation to ISL ABC postage stamps? He was informed that this was still on the list to do but there was no change as of yet.

He also thanked the IDS for the updates from the EUD conference during the year.

#### 5. Minutes of the EGM

There were no questions in relation to the minutes of the EGM held on the 9<sup>TH</sup> of September 2016. They were proposed by **Peter Murray**, seconded by **Kevin Lynch** and passed by a majority vote.

#### 6. Chairpersons Address

The Chairperson addressed the IDS AGM with her Chairperson's Address.

#### 7. 2016 Review

1. **Fergus Dunne:** asked if there were any updates in relation to the Education Partnership Group (EPG) pg. 30, as there had not been any information about that for a while.  
The CEO responded by saying that Fergus was right, it had been quiet but more people had recently become involved e.g. Mary Murphy, from the NCSE (National Council for Special Education) and Andrew Geary, organiser of the Deaf Education Conference, so he hopes that this will help make the EPG and their decisions about education of Deaf children more powerful and beneficial.
2. **Kevin Lynch:** Enquired about the meetings with RTE in relation to subtitles pg. 37 and if anything was happening here as he noticed subtitles were often inadequate/not working.  
The Hon. Secretary replied that DALs Admin- Susan Whelan mentioned RTE have a new access manager who has just started and is still finding her feet. We are hoping to see improvements in the future.
3. **Graham O'Shea:** Wondered if the IDS had any plans to publish the information and documents from the 2016 Deaf Education Conference?  
DALs Manager- Brian Crean said that the Deaf Education Forum reports are put together and available in the IDS. These are not available for public viewing yet due to confidentiality issues.

The IDS 2016 Review was proposed and seconded by **Peter Murray** and **Raymond Grehan** and passed by a majority vote.

## 8. Finance Report

1. The Auditor **Richard Kendrick** announced that the IDS have a larger deficit in the PEP account due to the income going down and expenditure going up in 2016. The income for 2016 compared to last year had gone down by 70,000-75,000 due to a reduction in donations, sponsorship and fundraising, which were caused as a result of the fallout from other Charity scandals e.g. Console. Although the expenditure had gone way up, this was planned expenditure. For example taking on more staff, renting a warehouse (as opposed to using one for free from CIDP as before) and setting up a third Charity shop.
2. The IDS need to increase income and control expenditure to ensure they do not run out of money.

### Queries by members

1. **Kevin Lynch:** wanted to clarify page 7 of the Auditors report, where it mentions a deficit in the accounts. The IDS need to watch this and watch cash flow.  
The Auditor responded to say that yes, page 7 is flagging the issue and showing what could happen. Agrees that IDS need to watch this and look at cash flow.
2. **Peter Murray:** The Auditors report showed ¼ loss from 2015 and the IDS need to get thinking and do something to change and improve this. Need to put a stop to further spending, suggested asking Richard to recommend a plan to reduce this. Maybe look at staff costs, as these are very high.  
The Auditor replied to say that he had attended meetings about this and that is exactly what was talked about. The IDS need to go through everything and every person and decide what is necessary and will start with this. Richard and Eddie to meet after Easter and go through what cuts could be made and how to boost income.
3. **Audrey Conama:** asked the Board when did the alarm go off in relation to the accounts and if any changes are going to be made? The IDS members only received the Auditors report before the AGM, but the Board must have known sooner. Concerned that the Board knew this for a few months and have not done anything about it yet. Also concerned as members cannot wait until next year's AGM for an update on finances.  
The Treasurer replied to say that they had seen this for a few months and had raised and discussed the issue with the CEO. She mentioned that the Board will have a plan and a timeframe after April.

The Auditor also responded to say that there is a deadline of the end of April to go through this. Things will happen very quickly after this.

4. **Libby Breheny:** noticed that the costs for postage, travel, training and interpreters was high. Could look at cutting this?

The Auditor replied to say that the cost of postage was high due to the Raffle. Before Rapport used to take care of this but it works out cheaper for the IDS to do this themselves. IDS did this themselves in 2016 in an effort to reduce costs for the raffle. The other costs for travel, training and interpreters are important costs as this means that work is happening and things are being done.

**IDS to look at raffle costs and have an overall review of everything.**

5. **Fergus Dunne:** Thanked the Auditor for explaining and mentioned he was concerned about membership. There has been a decline on previous years and that the IDS need to improve this. Could look at asking hearing students to join?

The Treasurer replied to say that this was part of an ongoing plan and that they hope to see an increase in membership for 2017.

6. **Audrey Conama:** said that although the IDS have a plan, the members must be kept in the loop and be update sooner than next year's AGM. Proposed to let members know what is happening and be given a full update within 6 months.

The Treasurer replied to say she hoped there would be a meeting about updates and future plans and that this will be before the end of 2017.

7. **Raymond Grehan:** Asked, where did the money from the sale of Blessington Street go?

The Auditor replied to say that it was the money that has allowed us to continue on. The deficit is in the money from 30 Blessington Street and if we did not have that money, the IDS would have had no money 2 years ago. The plan for that money was to go into a new charity shop, which it did and it has also kept the IDS going for the last two years.

8. **Ronan McDonagh:** asked about membership and membership forms. Members get updates by email and vlogs but the membership forms are not available and that the IDS need to chase up old members with the forms.

The Treasurer agreed and replied that membership forms will be available at all roadshows.

9. **Sandra Kennedy:** suggested that DALs ask everyone to pay membership for classes.

The Treasurer thanked her for her idea and said she would pass it on to the CEO and see if people would be happy with that.

The IDS Finance Report 2016 was proposed and seconded by **Sandra Kennedy** and **Libby Breheny** and passed by a majority vote.

### **Retaining the services of Richard Kendrick as Auditor**

This was proposed and seconded by **James O’Riordan** and **Graham O’Shea** and passed by a majority vote. Richard Kendrick will continue to be the auditor, and give advice and guidance to the Irish Deaf Society.

## **9. Chief Executive Report – Eddie Redmond**

1. Fundraising
2. Deaforward
3. DALs
4. ISLA
5. Meetings - ISL Recognition, Education Partnership. IDS – Future Plans
6. IDS Future Plans

The CEO stated that the ISD Board and Staff are aware and share the concerns in relation to the IDS finances and that we are going to put a timeframe on cuts and focus on increasing income.

### **1. Fundraising**

- a. The revenue for our National Raffle organised by Rapport was not good in 2016. This was not just a reflection on the IDS but other Charities have also experienced a drop in returns and donations due to different scandals throughout the year. People are now more concerned about where their money goes and therefore we need to make sure the IDS is transparent. The IDS Fundraising Manager – Janette, will meet Rapport before this year’s summer raffle to look at ways to reduce expenditure e.g. postage, and increase income.
- b. The IDS set up a new Charity shop in Drogheda in 2016, which has been busy. Although there was a lot of money involved in setting this up, it should increase income in the long run.

The IDS had originally planned to set up a fourth Charity shop, but have decided to put that on hold for the moment for two reasons:

1. The shop in Ashbourne has a high turnover, but it is too small and there is no storage area there, so it is moving to a bigger unit in the hope that it will bring in more revenue.
2. From November 2017, the lease for the shop in Phibsboro will be on a

month-to-month basis and the IDS have decided to look for something more secure in the Phibsboro area.

- c. Expenses for the IDS warehouse were high because until 2016 the IDS had the use of a warehouse from CIDP free of charge. Now the IDS had to rent a warehouse, back pay this rent and pay two full time staff members. The IDS need to think about how to increase donations to the shops, as these are the stock sold in the shops.
- d. Wesley Nolan is swimming the English Channel and is raising money for Irish Sign Language Recognition. He will be hosting a fundraising event in DVI on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June and is hoping to set the Guinness World record for fastest time fingerspelling the alphabet.

## **2. Deaforward**

- a. The Advocacy Service received the good news that they got the SSNO funding for 2017 and now are back operating with three full time staff (Elaine Grehan and two new staff members this year, Orla Grehan and Alison Harrington) who are very busy with different projects and meetings. A new application for SSNO funding has been submitted, and we should find out the result in May.
- b. Deaforward receive a number for grants for different projects, including Deaf Awareness Training, Peer Advocacy Roadshows and educating people working in mental Health Services about Deafness. They have already held some events in these areas and will be providing more.

## **3. DALS**

- a. DALS received its funding again and it has allowed the department to expand the classes around the country, hire more tutors, and provide more workshops. This service is based mainly in Dublin but it has expanded on a national basis to include some classes and workshops all over Ireland.
- b. They also received funding for filming and film appreciation workshops.

## **4. ISL Academy**

- a. Tracey Treanor is now working as ISL Coordinator full time. She has had a lot of interest in classes this year and has been inundated with work. The ISLA has had CDS placement students helping with the admin and now Tracey has Evan Johnston, on a TÚS scheme helping out a couple of days a week.
- b. Tracey will be heading Irish Sign Language Awareness Week 2017 and will be creating a sub-committee and the schedule of events. If anyone is

planning to organise events, please let Tracey know so she can add them to the timetable.

## 5. Meetings

- a. There has been a few issues with getting interpreters for different meetings this year and therefore the IDS will miss out on some opportunities that other organisations, with hearing CEO's, would not miss out on. The IDS are hoping that achieving ISL Recognition will help in this area.

## 6. Future Plans

- a. Hopefully, ISL will achieve recognition in Ireland soon.
- b. The IDS are delighted to be involved in a number of projects, for example, Justisigns and the ISL forum.
- c. The ISL forum has not yet been established, but its aim will be to get a network of researchers to look at and compile all the research done on/in the Deaf community and set up an online forum with these resources.
- d. Janette has been in contact with BITC (Business in the Community) who are willing to help out with a business plan and policies for the IDS.
- e. The IDS have applied for CORE funding from the Government to cover the cost of the office admin. This will stop the money we fundraise being used to pay these costs.
- f. There will be a focus on increasing membership because this number is very important when applying for grants as it shows the support we have and the number of people the IDS represents in its work.  
Members are encouraged to send any ideas they have for increasing membership to Eddie by email.

## Questions arising from the CEO Report

1. **Peter Murray** commended Eddie for this work and asked if the current Irish Government collapses or changes, what will this mean for the ISL Recognition Bill?

**Board Director John Bosco Conama** explained that because the Bill has passed stage two and is now on stage three, if the Government Does collapse it will still be on the agenda.

John Bosco proceeded to update members on a recent meeting that he and Eddie had attended in Leinster House with Senator Mark Daly. The Government have proposed many changes to the current Bill. They are proposing to only keep section 2 and 3 and remove the sections about ISL Interpreters and Broadcasting. The IDS are working with a Barrister on this and that a key worry for the IDS is the area of employment. **He**

**will be meeting with other representatives from CSILI and CDS and hopes to prove to the Government why a register of ISL Interpreters is important, and will continue to update people with vlogs.**

2. **Kevin Lynch** also thanked Eddie for his work and asked about the timeframe for the IDS policies and strategic plans. Are they 3 or 5 years?

The CEO replied to say that the IDS do not have a strategic plan and have not had one for seven years but will be creating one and thinks a 3-year plan would be more achievable due to the current economy and trends in this sector.

Kevin Lynch also suggested that IDS plan some members-only events or allow members to have a discount for events, and also, ask DALs students to pay membership.

The CEO responded that the IDS do plan to do this.

The IDS CEO Report 2016 was proposed and seconded by **Bernadette Power** and **Patricia Pentony** and passed by a majority vote.

## 10. Elections

1. The IDS received seven nominations from people interested on being on the Board however, one of these nominations was deemed invalid as the person who proposed the nomination is not an IDS member. Therefore, there were six valid nominations received.
2. There was only one nomination received for the position of Chairperson, Lianne Quigley, and the majority voted to accept her as Chairperson for 2017-2018.
3. No nominations had been received for the position of Vice Chairperson, so the Board asked if the members would agree to leave this decision to them at the next Board meeting. An internal decision by the IDS Board to decide the role of Vice Chairperson was proposed by **Raymond Grehan**, seconded by **Graham O'Shea** and passed by a majority vote.
4. Five people were nominated for Board Directors and these were, Wendy Murray, John Bosco Conama, Melissa Howlett, Jennifer Lynch and Colm Finnegan. **Audrey Conama** questioned Jennifer Lynch's nomination as she now lives in England and may not be able to attend Board meetings. IDS Chairperson replied to say that the Board meets 4 times a year and Jennifer will fly home for these meetings or will contribute via Skype as this is in the IDS Constitution.



5. **Audrey Conama** objected to Jennifer Lynch's nomination and Valerie Moore seconded this.

The Chairperson then asked members to vote in favour of accepting Jennifer Lynch's nomination as the objection had been raised.

Seven members then voted to accept the objection while 15 voted to accept Jennifer Lynch's nomination. Jennifer was then accepted as a Board Director.

6. As there were no nominations for the role of IDS Secretary, this was open to the floor.

**Audrey Conama** proposed **Michael Kelliher**, and this was seconded by **Valerie Moore** and passed by majority vote.

7. The IDS also received no nominations for the role of Treasurer so this was also open to the floor.

**Audrey Conama** asked that if members were in favour and understood that she would have to leave board meetings when certain topics related to DALs were being discussed, then could Melissa come back to being IDS Treasurer.

**Audrey Conama** proposed this, which was seconded by **Sandra Kennedy** and passed by majority vote. **Melissa Howlett** accepted the role as IDS Treasurer for 2017.

8. Five people had been nominated and accepted as Board Directors and there was one space left which was proposed to the floor.

**Valerie Moore** proposed **Graham O'Shea**, which was seconded by **Ronan McDonagh**. **Graham O'Shea** accepted this nomination.

**Denise Dowling** proposed **James Riordan** and Michael Kelliher seconded this. **James Riordan** accepted the nomination.

A break of 5 minutes was taken at **4:15pm** and a secret ballot was then conducted to decide who would be voted into the position of Board Director. **Raymond Grehan** proposed himself as the observer and this was first and seconded by **John Bosco Conama** and **John Giles**.

**James Riordan** was voted onto the IDS Board by the majority after the secret ballot.

### Questions Arising from the Elections

1. **Philip Grehan** states, that as the IDS had received 5 nominations but only 4 were valid, can we go with these four on the board and leave them to decide who will be Treasurer, Secretary Etc.?

The Chairperson replied to say that the IDS members would vote for the Secretary and Treasurer but asked that the Board be allowed to decide the Vice Chairperson.

2. **Philip Grehan** asked who pays for Jennifer Lynch's flights when she does fly home for Board meetings.

The Chairperson replied to day that she pays for the flights herself.

3. **Kevin Lynch** pointed out that the Chairperson had seconded Colm Finnegan's nomination. He then asked was it not normal practice for the Chairperson to remain neutral and not get involved in the voting?

The Chairperson responded to say that there was not any mention of this in the IDS constitution but that the IDS can look in to this.

4. **Jennifer Lynch** sent a video message to IDS members regarding her nomination, as she could not attend the AGM.

5. **Graham O'Shea** asked about Melissa and if she was stepping down as treasurer as this was unclear.

The Chairperson replied that it was decided at the EGM that Melissa would stay on as acting treasure until the AGM in order to comply with the Governance Code.

6. **Peter Murray** then asked Ronan Lowry if he would be interested in staying on as an IDS Board Director although his term had ended.

**Ronan Lowry** said thanks for the proposal but did not accept.

## 11. Motions and Resolutions

Before the 35<sup>th</sup> AGM, the IDS received 3 motions from **Fergus Dunne**. It was agreed to combine the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> motion as they were very similar.

1. *To ask the Board to look at bringing back the IDS Journal/ send out a bi-monthly newsletter to the members*

### Questions arising from this motion-

- i. **Raymond Grehan** said he would prefer this information on Facebook through ISL Vlogs rather than in a newsletter through written English.
- ii. **Kevin Lynch** agreed with this motion and suggested IDS send out the newsletter via email to reduce cost of postage.
- iii. **Philip Grehan** agreed and applauded this proposal and stated that members of the Deaf community did not know who was on the IDS Board. This information is necessary in the newsletter.
- iv. **Bernadette Power** mentioned that she had received the newsletter in the post in the past and receives the KDRC newsletter and that the IDS needs something like that.

- v. **Breda O'Grady** said that sometimes these newsletters repeat the same information over again and asked if one of the IDS staff members could look after this rather than employing a person from outside.
- vi. **Sandra Kennedy** asked if this newsletter would be sent to members only or to organisations as well.

The Chairperson said that this was on the list and that the Board supports this and were looking into it. The newsletter could be sent by email, containing links to the Facebook ISL videos and sent out to people and organisations who have paid their IDS membership.

**Twenty-seven** members voted to accept this motion.

- 2. *For previous IDS AGM minutes and reports to be sent to members only and not be available to the public or to make two copies of the minutes, one with the names and all specific details solely for the members and another without specific names for the public. To increase exclusivity to paid members and make people more confident to speak up at meetings.*

**Questions arising from this motion-**

- i. **Kevin Lynch** mentioned that minutes were a sensitive issue and that they need to be correctly proof read and clear and that the IDS could be challenged on this if information is removed.
- ii. **Michael Kelliher** pointed out that as this AGM is being livestreamed and will be on Facebook, all the information is already out there and on public record.
- iii. **Audrey Conama** concerned that if we remove information for the public that people will think we have something to hide.
- iv. **Frankie Berry** queried if there needed to be two separate documents and reports for minutes. One for members and one for the public?

**The Chairperson** said that the Board could look at amending minutes and possibly adapting them for the public. Keep important information and names in the document where necessary, for example, when people propose and second motions but maybe could remove other personal queries and summarise AOB.

**Board Director, John Bosco Conama** proposed that this be left to the Board for consideration, approval and investigation before making a decision.

**The Board is to look in to this have a meeting and update members.**

This proposal was accepted with a vote of **29** members.

## 12. Any Other Business

1. **Graham O'Shea** thoroughly enjoyed the open discussion on "Is the Deaf Community Dying" that took place before the AGM and suggested the IDS plan more events and conferences.
2. **Raymond Grehan** stated that the IDS needed to increase membership numbers and the IDS should laminate voting ballots to reuse rather than using new ones each year. He also mentioned that he finds the livestreaming very annoying and distracting and thinks the IDS should look at getting rid of this.
3. **Sharon Campbell** questioned if the ISL Recognition campaign was linked to the IDS as she always goes to ISL Recognition meetings but not to IDS meetings. She suggested approaching Google to ask if they could put something on the Google search for ISL Awareness Week. She also mentioned that she missed the old IDS Deaf news.
4. **Sandra Kennedy** suggested changing the IDS membership form and fee to make it more attractive to potential members. Proposed the IDS organise a charity dinner dance or fundraiser.
5. **Bernie Walsh** expressed her disappointment that she had not been notified about the IDS AGM beforehand and that there was no record of her being a member when she was. She stated that the IDS need to make sure this does not happen again and that all records are updated.
6. **Audrey Conama** agreed that she would love to have ISL translations of mainstream media back again like the Deaf news in the past. Also wants the Board of the IDS to be more visible as many people do not know who is on the Board. She suggested they do more vlogs on the Facebook page and website so they can be seen and people can get to know them.
7. **Frankie Berry** reminded the IDS to continue to work with CSILI to push for improvement in ISL interpreting. The IDS should link in with CSILI more and we need to work together for the ISL Recognition Bill.

### End of AGM

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**The Chairperson** thanked the Members, Board, Tellers, Minute Taker and Interpreters for attending the AGM and if anyone had any other questions to send an email. A raffle for all 2016 members then took place.

The Chairperson declared the 35th AGM closed at **5:00pm**.

## Chairperson's Address

Hello,

2017 was a busy and rollercoaster year for IDS. Importantly, we had a historic moment for the Irish Deaf Society and Irish Deaf community on 14th December and 24th December - after a long and gruelling campaign for ISL recognition, the state recognised our language - Irish Sign Language, as an official language on 14th December. ISL users across Ireland were delighted and celebrated. The President of Ireland Michael D Higgins has signed the bill into law. It is now the ISL ACT!! It was the best Christmas present ever for the Irish Deaf community.

I would like to thank all of the people who were heavily involved in this campaign and who attended countless meetings. I have seen and recognise their hard work. I also thank the many people who were involved in the past years, their hard work has paid off.

I would like to thank a number of politicians including Senator Mark Daly and Minister Finian McGrath for their commitment in getting the ISL Act enacted. IDS had various meetings with various politicians to encourage them to pass the bill. I also thank Minister Finian McGrath for attending the launch of ISL awareness week in September 2017.

With regard to our financial position IDS is in a difficult position and since the last AGM we have had several meetings to discuss the matter of reducing expenses and increasing income. We have had to enforce cutbacks on salaries of staff last summer. IDS is heavily reliant on fundraising and donations. IDS had various meetings with government officials to discuss seeking for core funding.

In May 2017, I represented IDS at the European Union of the Deaf General Assembly in Malta. A few weeks later, I was a guest at the European Union of the Deaf Youth's General Assembly in Dublin hosted by the Irish Deaf Youth Association, I would like to congratulate IDYA for their success in hosting this event.

IDS's annual event Summerfest took place in July 2017, it was great to see various people attend this event and having fun.

Another historic moment for the Deaf community, the UN general assembly has declared the 23rd September 2018 as international day of sign languages and will be the designated date

each year. I am delighted that the UN recognises and respects sign languages across the world.

Unfortunately, two of our Board Directors Colm Finnegan (August 2017) and James Riordan (November 2017) stepped down from IDS.

Sadly, our longest board members Wendy Murray Jr and Melissa Howlett are also stepping down at the AGM after serving 9 years and 7 years respectively.

Thank you, and the best of luck to Wendy and Melissa.

I would like to welcome Eugene Philips on joining the IDS Board in September 2017 as co-opted Director.

Four staff left during 2017 and I would like to thank them for their hard work and commitment to IDS.

With regret, I inform you of my decision to resign from my current position as Irish Deaf Society chairperson at the upcoming AGM in May and I wish to offer myself for nomination for the position of Treasurer.

Due to IDS's financial crisis at the moment, I believe that I am a suitable candidate for the Irish Deaf Society's Treasurer Position because I am very familiar with IDS finances and I bring my own financial expertise to contribute and to advise. I can focus on finance as a treasurer.

I believe it may be best for someone who would be in the best position as the chairperson to focus various roles while I am taking a treasurer position and also this would mean less workload for me as I have my own work commitments.

A new era has dawned for the Irish Deaf Community since the ISL Act was enacted.

I appreciate your support for IDS in the past and please continue your support, especially at now during this difficult time.

Thank you to all IDS members, members of the Deaf community, Board and staff for your hard work in keeping IDS strong and steady in 2017. Thank you all.

**Lianne Quigley**

## (2017) Review

### Irish Sign Language Recognition Campaign 2017

<https://vimeo.com/265766810/cfb8917352>

As you know, the dates of 14<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> December 2017 will always be remembered in our lives, we achieved the biggest prize ever - the official recognition of Irish Sign Language. Of course, to say that we were so thrilled is an understatement.

Euphoria aside, there is a lot of serious work to be done on the ISL Act. While we know it is not a perfect Act, it is a great stepping-stone towards substantive equality for Deaf people. We know there is more work to do on the register of interpreters, voucher system, educational rights for Deaf children and many other things.

We have initial plans of what to do with the Act, though it is important for us to remember that the Minister is obliged to issue a report on the Act in the year 2020. It is essential for us to log any incidents in detail that we think are against the Act, or any suggestion of how we can improve the efficiency of the Act. It is our main target for this campaign and I am sure that the Chairperson has expressed thanks to all concerned with the campaign and congratulated them for achieving the biggest prize.

**Dr. John Bosco Conama**

### Irish Sign Language Academy

<https://vimeo.com/265758774/6321a66fec>

2017 marked a milestone when President Michael D Higgins signed the Irish Sign Language Bill on 24<sup>th</sup> December and becoming law has set a historic moment that will be forever marked on our calendar in years to come, it was the culmination of many long years fighting for ISL recognition.

In 2017, our work was strongly focused on communications with the goal of promoting ISL and the benefits of learning ISL for adults and community education. ISL Academy is actively representing on a variety of advisory and steering groups, in particular relating to Quality and Qualification of Ireland (QQI), Department of Education and Skills (DES) and Education Partnership Group (EPG) where we promote ISL learning policy and implementation at a

national level and actively engage with other key stakeholders in delivering ISL educational and training programmes for personal and professional development.

Professional engagement with our teachers and the Centre for Deaf Studies, Trinity College are an important function of the service where new ideas and skills were brought forward to complement the expertise and commitment of our teachers. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) remained an important priority in 2017 with all our teaching staff engaged in a variety of training days, which included continuing development of our curriculum and inclusive practices at ISL Academy planning and implementing assessment procedures.

In 2017, ISL Academy delivered programmes nationwide, leading to 285 learners with QQI Level 3 and 4; an increase of 146% (2016:116 learners) and furthermore, an additional 78 taking up our ISL short programmes. However, the shortage of qualified ISL teachers being produced and an increased demand for classes is our central concern as it threatens to undermine plans for the ISL Academy.

The ISL Academy continues to review our involvement and support for our tutors under the ISL Home Tuition scheme; strengthening our position with DES and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) as a support service for our tutors and keeping a strong focus on tutors' and parents' voices, providing key first hand insights that should inform the development of the service and policies that affect users.

### **The year ahead**

The ISL Academy continues to strive for progression and growth, focusing on the steps along the way that will help us understand what is needed for our service to reach the bigger goal. The recent ISL Bill Act has prompted our department to review our operational plans without losing focus of our responsibility in enshrining the Bill.

Considering the associated challenges brought on by financial strain, we must explore innovative ways to utilise and develop our resources by looking into education programmes and seeking funding for research and training. The current level of demand, coupled with limited resources is over-stretching our department, as we do not receive government funding, therefore, we remain determined to secure core funding to enable the Academy to achieve its aims and objectives.

**Tracey Treanor – ISL Academy Manager**



## Advocacy and Representation

<https://vimeo.com/266502262/4b1511d0e8>

In November 2016 two new staff members joined the Advocacy Service; Orla Grehan, Community Resource Officer and Alison Harrington, Administrator. It has been a great bonus to have the extra staff as the Advocacy Service has become increasingly busy. They both contribute positively to the Deaf community and have formed strong relationships with clients. The number of clients using the advocacy service has increased over the past year. We see high volumes of people coming in to the office on Tuesdays from the Over 55s Day Centre. Skype and FaceTime has become more popular, with many people, particularly outside of Dublin, contacting us in this way, as it is more convenient for them. Over the past number of months, staff have been heavily involved with the ISL Recognition Campaign. Now that the Irish Sign Language Bill has become law, we expect to be extra busy as many of the organisations and agencies that will be affected will be seeking information and guidance. We have continued to meet with Pobal to keep up to date with information about the SSNO funding.

We welcomed students from CDS who chose to do their work placement with us in IDS. They have all settled in well and been a great help. It has been beneficial to them too, to use the theory and knowledge they have gained in college and see how it applies practically in a Deaf organisation. We wish them all the best in their studies and hope to see them again in the future.

Deaf Awareness Training (DAT) continues to be popular, we have received inquiries from organisations, and businesses in both the public and private sector who wish to find out more about the training. The aim of the training is to promote a more inclusive and communicative environment between Deaf and hearing people in the workplace. The feedback following the training has been extremely positive. We continue to tailor the material to the organisation making the booking so that it is relevant to participants. In November, Mater Hospital invited us to their first *Disability Awareness Day for Staff*. Elaine gave a presentation on accessibility for Deaf people in hospitals, which received very high praise. We made a short film to show the difficulties and limitations of lip-reading. We asked staff members to take the 'lip-reading challenge' to see how much they could understand and they were shocked at how hard it was. We made another video of Communication Tips that we showed too. This project was funded by the Department of Justice and Equality. We still have a sum of money left over, and will continue the work into 2018.

To celebrate ISL Awareness Week, we organised Deaf Awareness Training in a number of primary and secondary schools. The students learned about the Deaf community and got a chance to learn some basic ISL. As it was a younger audience, the training was interactive and lively and the trainers played ISL games and activities with them. The teachers and students gave fantastic feedback and many were interested to take ISL classes afterwards.

We received funding from the HSE's National Lottery to set up mental health workshops and presentations on topics that people were interested in. We organised an event in Deaf Village Ireland each month. We invited experts from well-known and respected mental health organisations such as One Family, Mental Health Ireland and the National Office of Suicide Prevention to give presentations. The events included practical tips on looking after your own mental wellbeing, as well as being a great opportunity to ask questions. Each event had a strong turnout, the feedback was positive and people who attended have requested more events like this in the future. We used up the entire fund and we hope to secure a similar grant in 2018.

The students who completed the UCD Course in Equality Studies graduated in September 2017. We wish to congratulate them on their graduation and hope that they will go on to achieve their goals. Sadly, one of the students, Katherine McQuaid passed away after the graduation. She will be remembered fondly.

The Advocacy Service was awarded funding from St. Stephen's Green Trust to run a QQI Level 6 course in advocacy. We worked with the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOUE) to organise the Information, Advice and Advocacy Course for twenty students. We met with the course tutor before the course began to discuss how to make it more relevant to the Deaf community. The course took place from August to December 2017. Upon completion, participants were better prepared to work as advocates within the Deaf community, having further developed their skills and learned new information. We look forward to their results, which will be released in early spring.

Our Knowledge Exchange Roadshows usually take place twice a year, one in the Spring and another one in Autumn. Last year, we cancelled the Autumn roadshow as our peer advocates were attending the Information, Advice and Advocacy training course. The students put a lot of work into the course and many students had to travel to Dublin from all over Ireland, so there was not enough time for them to prepare for the roadshows. We hope the Roadshows will be back on schedule for 2018.

We are very grateful to the IDS charity shops for raising the money for us to deliver training workshops to our own Peer Advocates. The workshops aimed to empower local Deaf people to take on the role of advocate and encourage them to engage with their communities on a local, regional and national basis. We welcomed some new faces to our team of peer advocates, and this has enabled us to expand and reach more people.

The Law Society of Ireland, O' Keeffe's Solicitors and DeafHear continue to work on the ISL Legal Project together. As the project was undertaken on a voluntary basis and with a restricted budget, the timeframe has extended far beyond what we are used to. There were also some delays that were out of our control and it has taken much longer to complete than expected. We hope that work will resume shortly and it will be finished soon.

IDS and other Deaf organisations were invited to discuss ways that access could be improved in the museums in Dublin and Mayo. Plenty of suggestions and ideas were put forward and I hope to see the improvements in 2018. The IDS and Citizens Information Board (CIB) have had ongoing meetings about the *Deaf Community Information Needs Report*. The draft was published in 2017 and the launch of the report is expected in 2018.

The Advocacy Service continues to meet with organisations such as Dublin City Council and Disability Federation of Ireland. We have also consulted with the Irish Prison Service regarding accessibility for Deaf prisoners. We have attended meetings with ITRS, ComReg and Eir to discuss the ITRS service, and the feedback from service users and organisations such as IDS. The last meeting was held in ComReg in August and it went well. Most of the concerns that we hoped to raise had already been acknowledged and plans had been put in place to address the technical problems users were experiencing. It is a positive step that the Deaf community are offered more choice and access through the ITRS and IRIS service. We find that many public and private bodies are unaware that the Minicom system is no longer widely used and has become obsolete, so there is still a long way to go to inform people of the new technology.

The MiDoc GP Out of Hours Service covers the Laois, Offaly, Longford and Westmeath area. Previously, they could only be contacted by phone call, but now they have set up a text service for Deaf and HOH users. In September, IDS and HSE arranged an information meeting in Athlone to inform Deaf people on how to register. We have since contacted the HSE's National Specialist in Accessibility in relation to setting up the text service nationwide and we are awaiting an update.

We have been involved in CIDP's Steering Group. The aim of the Transition Project Steering Group is to discuss the process of residents moving out of St. Joseph's House and to discuss residential home options for Deaf people. We also have been involved in CIDP Focus Group, discussing the planned new private nursing home, which will be located beside Centric Health on the Navan Road.

Summerfest 2017 was a great success. The event is a highlight in people's calendar and is a great opportunity to meet new friends and catch up with some old ones too. It also serves to strengthen bonds between Deaf and hearing people, especially children. A voluntary organisation called The Emerald Garrison, kindly offered to come. They dress up as Star Wars characters and attend fundraising events. It was a brilliant photo opportunity and they looked very impressive. We are also grateful to Dublin City Council and Sharing the Journey for allowing us to borrow their equipment. We are already looking forward to Summerfest 2018.

The Santa Fun Run took place in the Phoenix Park on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2017. IDS and Deaf Sport Ireland (DSI) worked together to organise the event and it was sponsored by Inspire Fitness. Although it was a cold day, it did not rain and we drew a good crowd. Everyone dressed up in Santa hats and t-shirts and it was a great way for people to socialise and get some exercise. There were some fantastic photographs and it was a lovely start to the festive season. The money raised will be divided between IDS and DSI.

**Elaine Grehan – Advocacy Manager**

## **Education**

<https://vimeo.com/266331762/26e8a4a1c6>

## **Funding**

Having received a 12% increase in funding from SOLAS, our total funds now amount to €240,000 for educational provisions. We are very grateful to SOLAS, who endeavour to ensure that access is made available for Deaf adults nationwide.

## Classes

Classes in 2017	
1. Art – 2 classes	2. Driving Theory Test – 4 classes
3. Bookkeeping QQI level 4 – 1 class	4. English – 6 classes
5. Computer QQI level 3 – 8 classes	6. English as a foreign language – 1 class
7. Computer QQI level 3 – Word processing – 4 classes	8. ISL QQI level 3 – 1 class
9. Computer QQI level 3 – Desktop Publishing – 1 class	10. Maths QQI level 3 – 1 class
11. Computer QQI Level 4 – 3 classes	12. Personal Development – 5 classes
13. Craft– Knitting – 2 classes	14. Photoshop – 1 class

Out of 169 students, 51 students completed the QQI courses in 2017

We opened up three major awards courses:

1. Everyday Life Skills Programme
2. Office Skills Programme
3. Health Care Assistance in conjunction with Cabra Community College

## One-Day workshops

We ran several one-day workshops, which included:

1. Car Maintenance
2. DIY
3. Facebook
4. Film Club
5. General Art and Craft
6. Xmas Art and Craft

## Deafhood Workshop

Our first Deafhood Workshop took place over the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> November, presented by John Bosco Conama. The second one was held over the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> and was presented by Teresa Lynch

There was a full turn out at the workshop, with 15 participants there.

### **Tutor in Service Training**

We ran an In-Service Training Weekend for all our active tutors.

### **National Council for Special Education Conference, Croke Park – 21/11/17**

1. There was no new information that supports the philosophy of the Deaf.
2. Due to the advancements in technology, the philosophy of mainstreaming and full inclusion is still being promoted.
3. There was no one with a disability on the presenter's panel list.
4. I briefly voiced my concern about how the absence of disabled people as key contributors in today's conference resembled a 1950's government where there were no women present.
5. Asked if there will be a change in the future where more people with disabilities would become leaders in the NCSE. No answer was given.

### **WFD Deaf Education Conference, Budapest**

There were presenters there from various parts of the world, all of whom were very impressive. The biggest concern was on the dwindling numbers at Deaf schools and the use of Cochlear Implants without exposure to signed languages. There was a common trend that the Deaf community needs to refocus their attention away from the dwindling of Deaf schools to mainstream schools, where full inclusion is possible if signed language is used. It was a huge disappointment that 95% of the audience were Deaf and practically next to none were from the medical field, policy makers or teachers of the Deaf who do not promote signed language.

### **Educational Partnership Group**

The Irish Deaf Society is involved with The EPG along with TCD's Centre for Deaf Studies, CIDP, Deafhear, Holy Family School, Our New Ears (Parent group) and Sharing the Journey (parent group). The main purpose of the EPG is to improve standards of Education for Deaf children in Ireland which includes the creation of new policies e.g., regarding resources being made available for Deaf children and their parents and a more formal Irish Sign Language policy to be used in Education

### **Brian Crean – DALS Manager**

## Fundraising

<https://vimeo.com/265762237/3a215c512c>

This year's Darts exhibition was held once again in the Setanta GAA club. The event was a huge success, which received a huge amount of support. We would like to thank Sam and Gerard from Setanta for choosing to fundraise for the IDS.

The opening night of the fundraiser for the IDS was held in the WestEnd Beauty Salon Drogheda. Debra, our Shop Manager, and Jacqueline the Shop Supervisor set up the event. MaryEsther and Sharon set up a pop-up shop, and held an auction in the salon. A huge amount of work end into this event and we are extremely grateful to all as it was a great success. Special thanks to Evita Mc Closkey and Inga Katina proprietors of The WestEnd Beauty Salon in Drogheda. We wish them every success in their new premises.

Kevin Donovan from Cork completed a marathon in every county in aid of the IDS. Having ran in all weather conditions he finished with 32 laps in the Cork Institute of Technology. The CEO presented him with a trophy in appreciation for fundraising. This was a fantastic achievement and we are extremely grateful to Kevin for choosing to fundraise for the IDS.

We would like to thank and congratulate the Maynooth students who fundraised for the IDS by performing "Hey Ho" in Irish Sign Language. A fun night was had by all. We are also very grateful to the students Maebh and Jack for all the hard work they put into this fundraiser.

The transition year students of Our Lady of Lourdes School Kilkenny had a fundraiser for the IDS and raised awareness for Irish Sign Language. They had their local TD, Paul Kehoe, come into the school to view their project on ISL, which he brought to Leinster House. We would also like to give a special thanks to their TY teacher Catherine Moran for all her hard work in raising the much-needed funds.

### ISL Week

For ISL week, we turned the shop windows blue. We ran a fun competition where we had students from the Centre of Deaf Studies in Trinity College teach the customers basic signs such as how to sign their name. We then invited the customers back on Friday to announce the winner give out prizes. Special thanks to our teachers Eilish, Siomha and Emma.

We had a number of bucket collections throughout the year,

- Bank of Ireland Rathmines
  - Castleknock Church x 2
  - SuperValu Blanchardstown x 2
  - Iliac Centre
  - Dunnes Stores Ashbourne
  - Blue Boxes in the shops throughout the city.
- 
- Donations – as always, we continue to seek your donations and if you would like to donate, you can drop donations into any IDS Charity shops or to the IDS offices in DVI. If you would like us to collect your donations, you can contact: Mary Esther 086 130 5029 or email

[warehouse@irishdeaf society.ie](mailto:warehouse@irishdeaf society.ie) Thank you for all your donations and continual support of the IDS, it is much appreciated.

### Raffle

- We had our summer and Christmas raffle this year. The IDS are one of the lucky charities that still gets great public support, a huge thank you to all the staff who helped with the raffle, especially Louise and Anna.  
We continue to look for support. If you wish to make a donation or organise a fundraiser contact: [kate@irishdeaf society.ie](mailto:kate@irishdeaf society.ie) or [sharon@irishdeaf society.ie](mailto:sharon@irishdeaf society.ie)

### Ashbourne

- The Ashbourne shop moved to bigger premises this year. It is just up the road from the old shop. A huge thank you to all the staff and volunteers who helped with the moving and opening of our new shop. The premises are much better as we are getting a lot of donations and the storage area is bigger. It is a busy shop with great volunteers and TÚS staff.

**Contact: Manager Anne Moloney 0864682800, Supervisor: Noeleen Galvin**

### Phibsborough

- The Phibsborough shop lease has expired; we are on a month-to-month lease as the probate is not yet complete on the late Des Kelly's Will. However, the shop continues to be busy. We have two TÚS workers and great volunteers who been in the shop since it opened.

**Contact Manager: Lorraine Cullen 0864137970, Supervisor Lisa O' Neill**

### Drogheda

- The Drogheda shop is doing great. We are getting more donations as more people become familiar with the shop. We have five TÚS staff and again great volunteers.

**Contact: Manager Debra Kerr, Supervisor Jacqueline Rossiter**

### IDS Warehouse

The Warehouse is very busy; we have two TÚS workers and great volunteers. The van driver and van assistant are kept busy stocking the shops and collecting donations around the city and Drogheda.

Mary Esther is busy sorting and moving stock to the three shops, putting together a themed window display every two weeks.

**Contact Manager: Mary Esther English 086 1305029, Driver Krzysztof Bury, Van Assistant Dara Ryan.**

### Bogus Collectors

This is an ongoing problem for the IDS and we receive regular reports from all around the country.



This involves Irish and foreign people with cards selling lines collecting money for the IDS, and in some reports pretending to be Deaf. The latest report is in the county Louth area where an Irish man is calling to doors and selling lines. We have reported this to the Gardaí. We do not do door-to-door collections. If you see any of these collectors, you need to report them immediately to the Gardaí and then report them to our office, as they are depriving us of much needed funds. Do not approach them.

**Kate Mullin – Fundraising Assistant**

## International Affairs

<https://vimeo.com/265763350/ede901371a>

### European Union of the Deaf General Assembly 2017

Chairperson Lianne Quigley attended the EUD General Assembly (GA) in Valletta, Malta as an Irish delegate for two days in May and the hot topics were membership fees (where a decision was agreed to increase membership by 5%) and the EUD Board elections, where there were only five candidates. Another decision that was made, was that the GA gave responsibility to the EUD to source the next location for 2018.

Prior to the GA, the Deaf People Association of Malta and the EUD organised a seminar “The European Pillar of Social Rights” and had various presentations on Maltese Sign Language and how they achieved recognition. There were also presentations on Deaf employment, Deaf refugees, Interpreters in Europe, the UNCRPD and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

**Lianne Quigley**

## Broadcasting

<https://vimeo.com/265770188/409c0b2674>

### Broadcasting Authority of Ireland

The IDS attended two meetings with the BAI’s USER CONSULTATIVE PANEL in May and December 2017.

#### Why do we have these meetings?

The BAI need advice from the Deaf community in relation to subtitles regarding ISL on screen and all Deaf related materials seen on Irish TV. We also get information from the broadcasters (like RTE, TV3, etc.) on their upcoming plans. Our comments and views are brought to a “compliance committee” who represent us in meetings with TV broadcasters.

Below are some general points/summary that were raised in **all** meetings this year:

Were the Access Rules complied with? If not, what are the repercussions? We have yet to get a satisfactory answer regarding what happens when a broadcaster fails to meet the access rules.

There is still confusion regarding platforms (i.e. who is responsible for SKY, Virgin Media, Saorview). There have been subtitling errors evident on one platform and not another and the BAI have failed to give an answer regarding responsibility.

Issues continued to be raised about the standards of TV3 subtitles.

The BAI will be reviewing their rules early 2018 and members of the Deaf community will be encouraged to submit their feedback, comments and views

Susan Whelan from the Irish Deaf Society also participated in a separate interview for the BAI for a formal review of the Access rules (in preparation for 2018). This interview gives the BAI the perspective from the Irish Deaf Society on the current provisions of the Access Rules and on the quality of access service provisions currently provided.

The Irish Deaf Society regularly submits subtitle and ISL failure mistakes from RTE and TV3 to the BAI in the form of email complaints and video examples.

### RTE/TV3

**RTE:** We reported in last year's report there was no RTE meetings in 2016, however, there was two meetings in 2017 – January and November.

Summary of notes from the two meetings:

Two new documentaries have been commissioned for 2018, details TBA

Long-term RTE employee Anne Barry is retiring from the subtitles department

The RTE player is being improved and we expect to see even more improvements by April 2018 onwards

The IDS continue to work with the RTE team reporting on issues and errors reported by the Deaf community.

RTE confirmed that comments on Twitter may not be seen by the relevant people in RTE, thus the IDS will be proposing new hashtags to be used by the Deaf community to report subtitle/ISL errors

**TV3:** We did not meet with TV3 in 2017, however, we keep in contact via email to help assist them with any errors

### Complaints to RTE/TV3/UTV Ireland

If you wish to contact RTE or TV3 with your opinions/complaints about their services to the Deaf community you can:

RTE EMAIL: [Feedback@rte.ie](mailto:Feedback@rte.ie) and [subtitle@rte.ie](mailto:subtitle@rte.ie)

TV3 EMAIL: [subtitles@tv3.ie](mailto:subtitles@tv3.ie)

Or, if you are not comfortable sending a complaint text, you can contact the IDS and get assistance with writing a complaint.

A new Twitter hashtag will be shared with the Deaf community when the agreed hashtag is confirmed

### Website and Social Media

**Website:** The Irish Deaf Society webpage was launched in October 2014, all permanent content is translated into ISL (except previous AGM and Financial Report). In 2017, we received a small amount of funding which allowed us to re-design the homepage (however, this is not yet completed) and add a new booking system for Irish Sign Language classes.

### **Facebook (as of 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018)**

1. The Irish Deaf Society's main Facebook page has 7591 'likes', this has risen since last year's report of 5380 'likes'
  - a. The Irish Deaf Society Facebook page remains the no.1 Irish Deaf related Facebook page in Ireland.
2. The Irish Sign Language Recognition Campaign has 3327 'likes'
3. The (new) Irish Deaf Charity Shop page has 562 'likes'

This page is regularly updated with events, announcements, photographs or discussion items. If you would like to join our page, you can search for *Irish Deaf Society* and add us as a friend. If you would like the IDS to display your events on Facebook – please contact us via email at - facebook@irishdeafsociety.ie

### **Twitter (as of 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018)**

We set up a @irishdeafsoc twitter page. We have sent 1826 tweets and have 4293 followers (last report was 3300 followers).

**Susan Whelan – Digital Media Manager**

