



Chief Executive

Candidate brief 

April 2026

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Welcome

Thank you for being interested in the role of Chief Executive at Merseyside Society for Deaf People (MSDP).

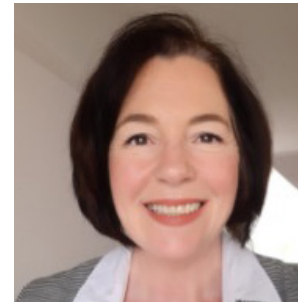
Since 1864, MSDP has been at the heart of the Deaf community across Merseyside, and our purpose has remained constant: to ensure that Deaf, Deaf Blind, and hard-of-hearing individuals can live full, connected, and confident lives, free from barriers that restrict opportunity. Today, we are proud to be a values-driven organisation with a rich heritage, a trusted reputation, and a clear vision for the future.

Our work is wide ranging. From specialist frontline support to British Sign Language (BSL) training, Deaf awareness training, and vibrant community spaces. Everything we do is shaped by the needs and experiences of the people we serve. Many of our staff bring lived experience, which continues to strengthen our culture, insight, and impact.

The need for our work is growing. Hearing loss affects about one in five people on Merseyside, and too many still face avoidable barriers in everyday life. MSDP plays a vital role not only in providing support, but in driving change – amplifying Deaf voices, influencing systems, and working with partners to build a more inclusive society.

I am immensely proud of what our team achieves every day. We are entering a period of both challenge and opportunity: rising demand, shifting funding landscapes, and a growing recognition of the importance of accessibility across all sectors. Thanks to our outgoing CEO's leadership and our staff's dedication, we are in a strong position—healthy reserves, a prominent profile, and a renewed organisational structure designed for the future.

We are now seeking an exceptional leader to guide MSDP into its next chapter. Someone who combines strategic vision with deep commitment to our mission and values; who can work collaboratively with our Board, staff and community; and who will build on our strong foundations while helping us extend our reach and influence.





Our CEO role provides a rare opportunity to lead an organisation with a powerful legacy, a passionate community and a clear sense of purpose. If you share our commitment to equality, empowerment and inclusion, we would be delighted to hear from you.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, many thanks again for your interest in MSDP.

Elaine McDonald
Chair of Trustees



About MSDP

Introduction

MSDP has been supporting and empowering Deaf, Deaf Blind and hard-of-hearing people since 1864. We are one of the oldest Deaf charities in the country and an important part of the Deaf community on Merseyside.

We are a local charity with a national outlook. Campaigning, advocacy and practical support are all central to who we are. We work to advance equality for Deaf, Deaf Blind, and hard-of-hearing people by raising awareness of the barriers they face and providing accessible, high-quality services that promote independence, inclusion, and well-being.

We are a “lived experience”- led organisation and work in partnership with Deaf, Deaf Blind, and hard-of-hearing communities to design and deliver services that reflect real needs and lived realities.

In May 2023, MSDP became a founder member of the British Deaf Association’s BSL Alliance, which brings together Deaf-led organisations from across the UK and contributes to the Government’s BSL Advisory Group in support of the BSL Act 2022.

Being Deaf on Merseyside

There are 11 million Deaf or hard-of-hearing people in the UK, and 70,000 BSL users. Many Deaf people don’t view their hearing impairment as a disability, and they are proud to be part of a community with such a rich cultural heritage.

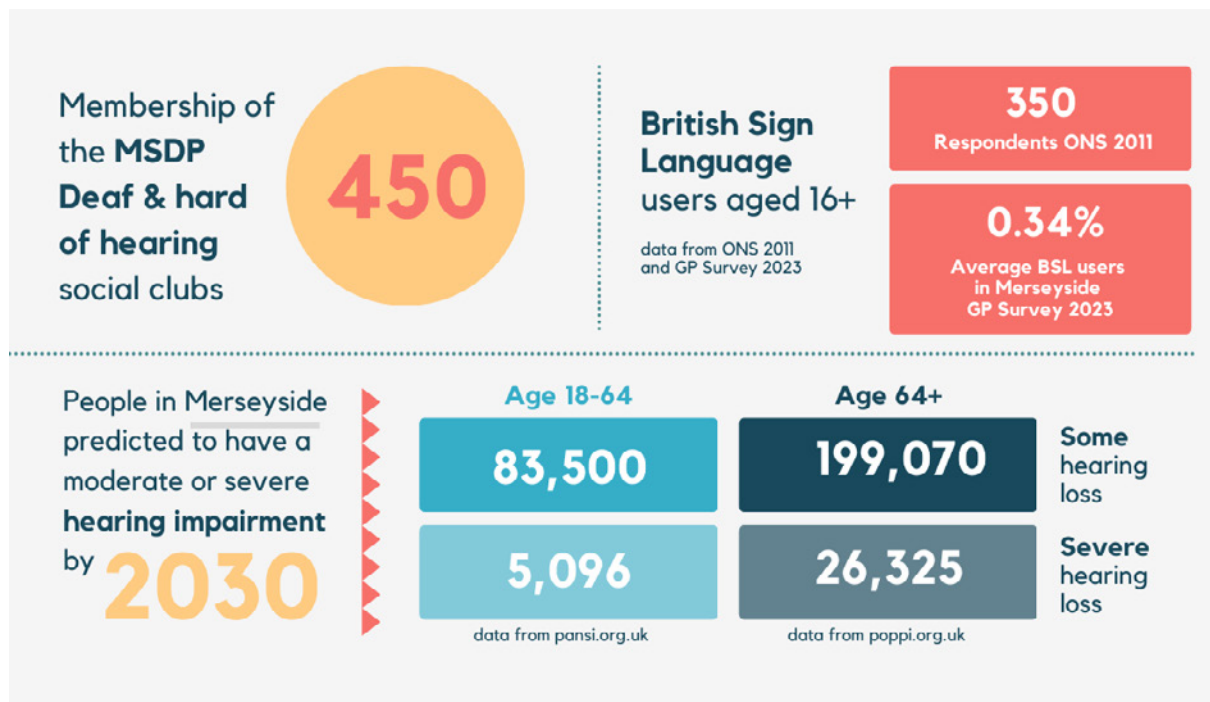
However, Deaf people in the UK are at a huge disadvantage compared to the hearing population, and this disadvantage starts at a young age. The vast majority of Deaf children have parents who can hear, and as many parents do not learn BSL, this can make communication very difficult.

This problem is exacerbated by a lack of support within the school system, the consequence of which is a big gap in educational attainment between Deaf and hearing children. This makes Deaf people less employable and less able to fulfil their potential.



For most Deaf people, BSL is their first language and, as such, it can be a challenge to engage with written English. This means that there is a huge amount of information that is just not available to Deaf people, which impacts all aspects of their lives.

For example, navigating the benefits system, dealing with utility companies and getting financial advice can be extremely challenging as these services are rarely accessible in BSL. Moreover, a general lack of Deaf awareness amongst the general public can also mean that Deaf people feel socially isolated and marginalised.





This is the reality for many Deaf people in Merseyside and across the UK. At MSDP, we do not think this is acceptable, and we are devoted to helping Deaf, Deaf Blind, and hard-of-hearing people achieve a full, active and influential role in mainstream society.

Our mission

Our mission statement says:

To work in partnership, bringing together Deaf and hearing communities to create more accessible, high-quality services.

(For MSDP, "Deaf" includes Deaf, Deaf Blind, and hard-of-hearing people.)

MSDP exists to advance equality for all Deaf, Deaf Blind, and hard-of-hearing individuals by increasing awareness of the barriers they face and promoting independence through accessible services and better opportunities to contribute in a full, active, and influential role in mainstream society.

We achieve this by working in partnership, bringing together Deaf, Deaf Blind, and hard-of-hearing communities to create more accessible, high-quality services that safeguard and enhance the lives of service users and promote independence and inclusivity.

Our aims

Our aim is to address the many barriers and inequalities experienced by Deaf people, Deaf Blind people and the hard-of-hearing and to serve as an ambassador for change.

We want the people and communities we serve to play a full, active, and influential role in society. We want to help people access the services they need and secure the opportunities they seek. We aim for everyone to realise the career prospects they deserve, without unnecessary obstacles limiting their participation or potential.

Our values

Our Board, staff and volunteers are committed to the organisation's core values, which underpin everything we do and are captured in **PROUD**:

We honour our principles of:



Our services

We deliver a wide range of services.

Support services

We deliver individual support packages to the Deaf and Deaf-Blind community, covering translating letters, making telephone calls, providing information and advice, and signposting to other agencies. We also work in partnership with statutory and other agencies to help members of the Deaf community.

Environmental aids

We help people to live safely and independently at home by providing equipment such as amplified or flashing alert systems, vibrating pagers, loop systems and television aids.

Training and development

We provide Deaf awareness training and BSL training for individuals,



employers, public sector organisations and other groups. Our BSL training covers Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6.

Workplace and organisational support

We advise employers and service providers on improving accessibility and communication for Deaf, Deaf Blind, and hard-of-hearing people, conduct workplace audits, and provide tailored support.

Community activity and connection

Through our centres in Liverpool and Birkenhead, we provide community space, social opportunities and activities to reduce isolation, build confidence and strengthen connections.

MSDP is home to one of the largest Deaf clubs in the UK, with more than 300 members, and we regularly welcome Deaf visitors from around the world.

Digital inclusion and targeted projects

We deliver projects that increase independence, improve digital access, reduce isolation and support specific groups, including Deaf refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants.

Our strategic priorities

Over the last year, we have made significant progress against our 2024–2027 strategic goals:

1. To develop MSDP's position in the local community

- Reintroduced a family service for Deaf children, engaging 30 families in the first year.
- Expanded the Deaf Migrant Project with an online Welcome Pack and new referral pathways into the service.
- Strengthened our influence through partnerships with NHS Trusts, local authorities, and community organisations.
- Delivered high visibility community events, including BSL walking groups, museum tours, football club events, and Heart Health Checks.



- Represented regional Deaf perspectives through the BSL Alliance and Healthwatch forums.

2. To increase revenue and develop the organisation

- Achieved strong financial performance: increasing training income by 43%, interpreting income by 30% and support services income by 10%.
- Delivered a small operational surplus and maintained our target reserves level of three months' operating costs.
- Reduced long term costs through utilities separation with tenants at Queen's Drive.
- Strengthened governance through an updated Memorandum of Association and improved induction processes.
- Invested in workforce development, including the progression of Deaf staff into leadership roles and by providing comprehensive training programmes.

3. To extend the customer base and increase participation in the wider community

- Delivered 616 Deaf Awareness/Intro to BSL sessions and enrolled 73 accredited BSL students.
- Launched BSL Level 4 and maintained excellent learner feedback (98% rating tutors "excellent").
- Delivered 11,831 hours of community support and 1,947 duty sessions (+34%).
- Completed 1,254 Environmental Aids home visits (+14%).
- Expanded reach through partnerships with Liverpool FC, Everton FC, Specsavers, Edge Hill University, and LGBTQ+ networks.

4. To enhance technology to improve service delivery

- Completed a full IT upgrade and installed dedicated public Wi-Fi in the community room.
- Rolled out digital HR, client management and learning management systems.
- Delivered digital inclusion sessions supporting Deaf BSL users with online banking, email, and everyday digital tasks.
- Launched a community broadband hub with strong early engagement.



- Began exploring ethical and responsible use of AI in service delivery.

5. To undertake a person-centred approach to all service provision

- All Advice and Support services delivered in BSL, ISL and Deaf Blind Tactile Signing.
- Strengthened safeguarding, risk assessment, bereavement support and confidentiality practices.
- Increased ISL capability to support Deaf migrants.
- Embedded user led engagement, with Deaf staff and community voices shaping service design.
- Continued support for Wirral Deaf Community through room hire and drop in services.

Overall, we have strengthened our financial resilience, expanded our reach, deepened our partnerships, and enhanced our digital and organisational capabilities – all while maintaining a strong commitment to Deaf-led, person-centred service delivery.



Context for the appointment

MSDP is proud of its history, reputation and impact. We are financially sound, with commissioned income and healthy reserves, but we are operating in a challenging environment.

Demand for our services is growing. The needs of Deaf, Deaf Blind, and hard-of-hearing people continue to evolve, and support systems do not always keep pace. Rising delivery costs, pressure on public funding and the need to diversify income all make this a pivotal moment for the organisation.

We see major opportunities ahead. These include:

- growing our grant and fundraising income, and expanding commercial and traded services
- making the best use of our property and other assets
- further enhancing our profile, regionally and nationally
- making better use of technology, while helping shape its development in ways that reflect the realities of Deaf communication and culture
- further extending our support for children, young people and families
- responding to the needs of an ageing population and people with more complex needs.

This is an opportunity for a new Chief Executive to lead MSDP through its next phase of development: building resilience, deepening impact and ensuring the organisation continues to be a powerful voice for the communities it serves.

Lead our next chapter

MSDP is a widely respected charity that improves the lives of Deaf people across the region. We're proud of our impact – but we're also looking ahead. Our next Chief Executive will help shape our future by expanding the high-quality services that make a real difference every day. diversifying our income, strengthening our culture and raising our external profile.



About the role

We're looking for an inspiring, values-led leader who can combine long-term vision with day-to-day delivery. You'll work closely with the Board of Trustees to steer our business strategy, ensuring both sustainability and innovation.

You will lead teams with compassion and purpose, embedding Deaf culture and equality at the heart of everything we do. As our ambassador, you'll also influence partners, funders, and policymakers to broaden our reach and impact.

In summary, you will lead MSDP through its next chapter by:

- delivering the strategy and shaping future direction
- ensuring strong governance, compliance and financial stewardship
- supporting and developing staff and organisational culture
- diversifying income and strengthening sustainability
- raising MSDP's external profile and influence
- championing accessible, high-quality services.

About you

You will bring strategic leadership experience with a proven record of accountability, financial stewardship, strong governance, and organisational growth. You're a confident communicator and influencer, comfortable building partnerships and leading campaigns. Above all, you share our values of inclusion, integrity, and community.

We are particularly interested in candidates with experience in one or more of the following fields:

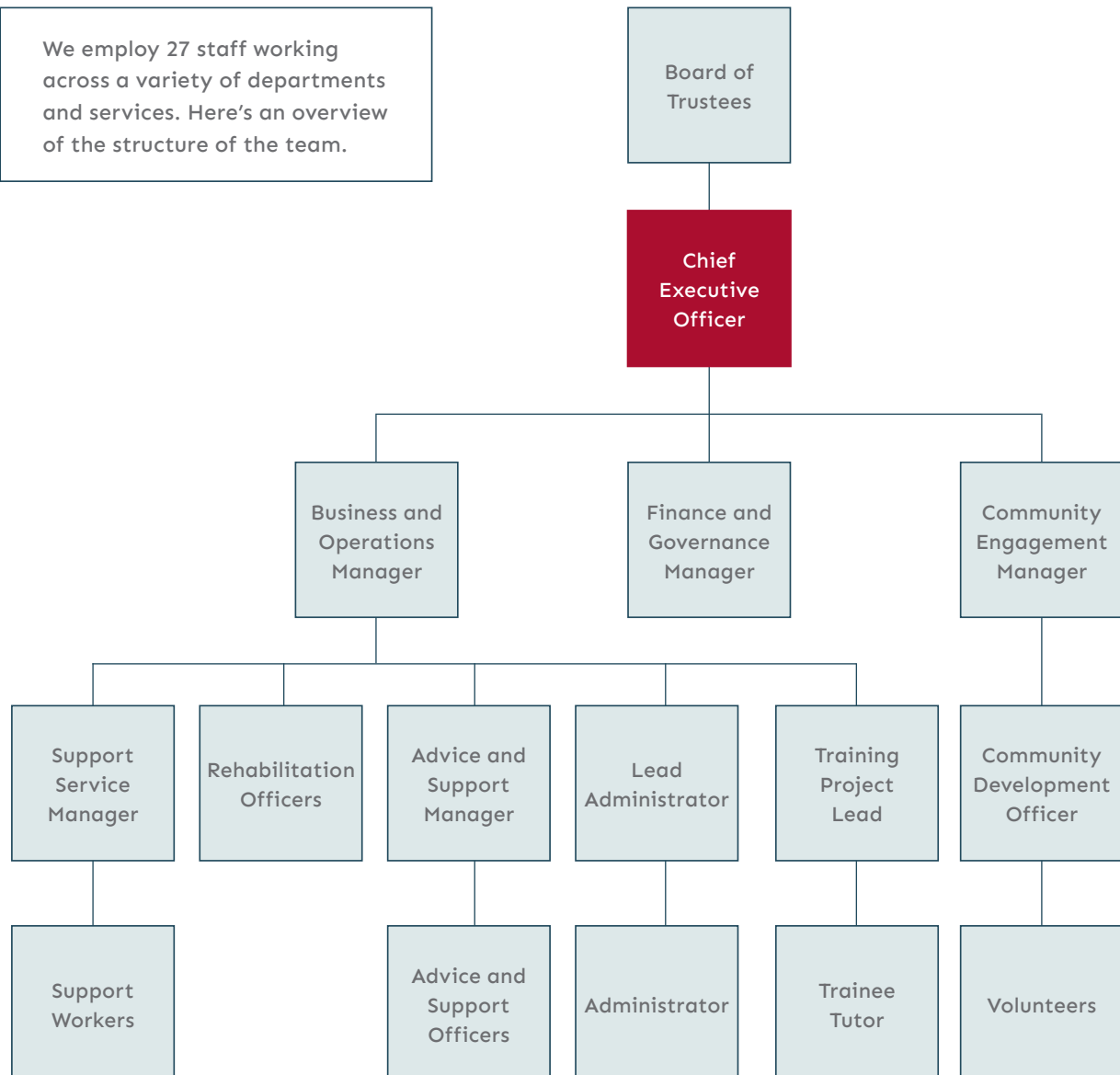
- charity and voluntary sector leadership
- deaf, disability or sensory loss services
- community-based services
- social care, health or education
- campaigning, advocacy or social justice work.

Why join us?

This is a rare opportunity to lead an established and trusted charity into its next phase of development: secure in its foundations, ambitious for its future, and deeply connected to the people it serves.

Our organisational structure

We employ 27 staff working across a variety of departments and services. Here's an overview of the structure of the team.





Job description

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|------------------------|--|
| Job title | Chief Executive Officer |
| Salary | £60,000 pa |
| Location | 396 Queens Drive, Queens Drive Retail Park, West Derby, Liverpool, L13 0DJ |
| Hours | 35 per week |
| Responsible to | Board of Trustees |
| Responsible for | Overall Organisational Leadership |

Purpose of the role

The Chief Executive Officer provides strategic, visionary, and accountable leadership. Working in partnership with the Board, the CEO ensures the charity's long-term sustainability, strong governance, excellent service delivery, and cultural integrity. The CEO will inspire staff, volunteers, and stakeholders around a shared vision and drive operational excellence through effective planning, management, and innovation.



Key responsibilities

1. Strategic and long-term leadership

- Lead the evolution and delivery of a clear, future-focused vision and strategy over three, five and 10 years.
- Translate strategic goals into robust operational delivery and performance management plans.
- Build and sustain a purposeful organisational culture that motivates staff around shared values and priorities.
- Anticipate future trends in the deaf, disability, and charity sectors and position the charity to thrive in a changing environment.

2. Accountability and sustainability

- Ensure the charity meets all legal, regulatory, and ethical standards.
- Oversee effective financial management and ensure long-term sustainability through diversified income streams.
- Identify and mitigate organisational risks, providing assurance to the Board of Trustees.
- Monitor organisational performance against targets and act decisively to address underperformance.
- Foster transparency, integrity, and accountability in all operations.

3. Communication, influence, and external engagement

- Build strong stakeholder relationships locally and nationally, representing the charity with credibility and influence.
- Lead campaigns, partnerships, and collaborations that advance the rights and opportunities of Deaf people.
- Engage effectively with the media, policymakers, funders, and community leaders to raise awareness and support.
- Develop and oversee marketing and communications strategies to enhance visibility and reputation.
- Use political and sector networks to advocate for positive policy change and resource opportunities.



4. Organisational and people leadership

- Provide visible and values-based leadership across the organisation, promoting inclusion, respect, and innovation.
- Support and empower staff and volunteers through effective management, development, and recognition.
- Lead organisational development and transformation initiatives with clarity and compassion.

5. Governance and board relationship

- Work constructively with the Board of Trustees, supporting them to fulfil their governance responsibilities.
- Provide clear, timely, and accurate information to support strategic and financial decision-making.
- Champion the Nolan Principles of Public Life in all aspects of leadership and decision-making.



Person specification

Essential

- Proven strategic leadership and long-term planning experience with demonstrable impact over multi-year horizons.
- Strong record in regulatory compliance, financial management, and organisational risk management.
- Evidence of achieving sustained performance improvement and financial or service growth.
- Skilled communicator and influencer with experience in stakeholder engagement, external partnerships, and advocacy.
- Track record of leading change and transformation, motivating teams through shared purpose and strong culture.
- Board-level experience or substantial exposure to charity governance and accountability.
- Demonstrated commitment to community consultation, co-production, and inclusive growth.
- Alignment with the Nolan Principles of Public Life and high personal integrity.

Desirable

- Previous experience as a CEO or equivalent leadership role.
- Management experience in the charity sector.
- Knowledge or background in deaf, disability, health, community, or social care sectors.



Terms and conditions

We offer

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Salary | £60,000 pa |
| Holiday entitlement | 27 days annual leave per year, rising to 32 days per year after five years' service. |
| Healthcare | Membership of the Medicash Employee Assistance Programme with cashback on a range of healthcare costs. |
| Flexible working | Opportunity for flexible working, although this role is predominantly based within our community hub on Queen's Drive. |
| Benefits | Automatic enrolment and contribution to workplace pension with 3% employer contribution. Opportunities for continuing professional development, including BSL training and apprenticeship pathways. Five days paid study leave. Generous sick pay package. |



How to apply

For an informal conversation about the role, please contact our recruitment partner, NFP Consulting:

Simon Lloyd Director | NFP Consulting
07961 988 523 simon.lloyd@nfpconsulting.co.uk



To apply, please submit your CV and a supporting statement explaining how you meet the requirements of the role. Applications in written English, BSL video, or other accessible formats are welcomed. As a general guide, your Supporting Statement should be around two sides of A4.

View a BSL version of the candidate brief on the [MSDP website](#).

Please apply online with Word Documents at:
nfpconsulting.co.uk/msdp or email to info@nfpconsulting.co.uk

Closing date: Friday 22nd May

Selection process and timescales

Stage 1 Week commencing 1st June

First round of screening interviews, these will be conducted by NFP Consulting.

Stage 2 Week commencing 8th June

Candidates taken forward to the final interview stage will be invited to visit us, see our set-up and meet informally with staff and parents.

Stage 3 Week commencing 22nd June

The final round of interviews will be held in person and on-site.



Accessibility

Please let us know if you have any special requirements which we might need to consider in relation to the selection process, e.g. attending interview, completing any part of the selection process. Any requests will not be taken into account in the selection process.



MSDP is a Disability Confident Employer

