

North London Deaf Children's Society AGM Committee Report for 2021

Presented to members on 3rd February 2022

The NLDCS aims to offer support by providing accessible events and activities for deaf children and their families in an inclusive, safe environment where ideas and knowledge can be shared and friendships made. Many events are heavily subsidised by the NLDCS and some are free of charge to members.

With COVID-19 still being a major factor for organising events, we continued with online activities, but as the weather got warmer, we were able to arrange more face-to-face events in the outdoors.

Our year in numbers	2019	2020	2021
Subsidised or free events for families	9	5	7
Email communications	36	27	17
Newsletters	2	2	2
Mailing list of members, schools, professionals	98	100	117
Families who attended our events this year	22	18	53
Age range of children	0 - 15	0-14	0 -13

Events 2021

February:

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The AGM was held on Zoom Reports on activities in 2021 and accounts were presented and the formal voting for committee officers – Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and the other members of the committee was actioned. See below for details of the committee.

Pizza Making with Daisy Bakes

Nine families took part in the online pizza making activity with professional baker Daisy, who took them through the process for creating their favourite flavours. BSL interpretation was provided thanks to Ben Jefferson.

March:

Bake a clock

As March signalled the clocks going forward, this was a great opportunity to use baking to strengthen maths skills and the language of time. Many thanks to Naomi Thomas for the BSL interpretation of this activity.

July:

Picnics in Highgate Wood

July saw not just one, but two NLDCS picnics in Highgate Wood as those that couldn't make it on the first date, came along the following weekend. Over the two weekends, 22 families came together to play games, catch up with old friends and make new ones.

July and October: Visits to ZSL London Zoo

With Covid-19 still a major concern in organising face-to-face events, a trip to the zoo in Regent's Park was a popular choice. Through the ZSL Community Access Scheme, the NLDCS could offer extra discounted tickets to deaf children and carers to London Zoo. To make this an inclusive event, the NLDCS discounted sibling tickets reducing a family's cost even further. 25 families spent the day discovering the wild and wonderful animals.

November:

Art

Cartoonist Sally-Ann from Sallyshinystars led the final activity of the year with an online art workshop via zoom. Children from nine families took part, drawing a series of food and animal themed designs. They learned styles and techniques for future use and provided some great drawings to colour in after the session finished.

Committee Activities

The committee elected at the AGM in February 2021 Kam Makram (chair), Donna Apparicio (treasurer) Zibiah Loakthar (secretary). Other committee members are: Sharon Webb (safeguarding), Rayan Basma, Denis Coelho, Esther Conway, Suki Gill, Barbara Kasperska, Pari Kotecha, Lauren Rapacioli, Marvi Rauf, Jess Robson, Linda Sells & Following interest at the meeting, we soon also recruited Nosheen Akhtar and Natalie Collins to the committee.

Sadly, due to family commitments, Kam had to step back from her role as chair and Esther became acting chair for the rest of 2021.

We've settled into a Zoom committee meetings routine. Whilst missing the face-to-face meetings (and the lovely snacks!), the online meetings do help fitting in the meetings around family life.

Committee members attended online both Barnet, and Haringey and Enfield Children's Hearing Services Working Group (CHSWG) meetings with local authority and NHS staff in attendance to establish contacts, represent other families and find out news and information.

The NLDCS website continues to include a resources and information page including COVID-19 links and deaf specific learning resources as well as other useful online links. Communications to members included information about NLDCS and National Deaf Children's Society events in addition to information about local services for deaf families. We also share details about other events and news that might interest our members.

We have a private **Facebook Group** for members in addition to an **Instagram** account and hope to grow this as a way to share ideas, stories and news.

Committee members are up-to-date on safeguarding issues and hold DBS certification.

For fundraising the NLDCS is now on Amazon Smile in addition to being an eBay Charity, so please remember us when shopping. Unfortunately, Virgin Money Giving is now closed, so that platform is no longer available for fundraising. We are considering alternatives.

Plans for 2022

Watch out for news via email, our website and social media of plans for activities and COVID safe outings. If any member has ideas for online activities that would work via Zoom, please do get in touch.

CAN YOU HELP? We always need new committee members. We are always looking for new committee members who have a few hours a month spare to join the team. We are especially looking for those with good organisational skills to help organise events and those with experience in Mailchimp and WordPress to help with our communication.

Finally, we say a huge thank you to everyone who has volunteered their time and expertise for the NLDCS this year and especially to those who have communicated at our events. We can't do it without you.