

**North London Deaf Children's Society AGM Committee Report for 2024
Presented to members at our AGM held online
on 4th June 2025**

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. This year we have been delighted to be able to hold a range of activities and gatherings in person and welcome new families and professionals to our growing network.

Our year in numbers	2024	2023	2022	2021
Subsidised or free events for families	6	7	9	7
Email communications	9	20	14	17
Newsletters	10	6	7	2
Mailing list of members, schools, professionals	147	143	135	117
Families who attended our events this year	45	37	37	53
Age range of children	0-15	0 – 14	0-14	0 -13

Events Over The Year

March 2024: Laser Quest

Seven families had fun at our Laser Quest event in Enfield for families with older deaf children. It was a blast and everyone had fun taking aim at each other to get the most shots!

May 2024: NLDCS Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The NLDCS AGM held in Martin Primary School in May 2024 was attended by 11 members including committee. Kanwaljit Makram (Kam) Co-chair, covered the minutes of the previous AGM, followed by Zibiah Loakthar, Secretary who gave a detailed report of activities and membership in 2023. Accounts were not formally presented to the membership but as always are available to anyone who requests them.

The Committee officers and other members who were elected are:

Pari Kotecha, stood down from the committee and long time committee member and former treasurer Linda Sells retired after 25 years of service. She was presented with a bouquet of flowers and gift in thanks for all her work for deaf children in the region. While the AGM occurred the children of 13 families were entertained by the Wild Science Mobile Zoo that brought along a wonderful collection of exciting animals. The children were entranced by the bearded dragon, the tarantula and the toad.

One of our young attendees said:

“My favourite was the hamster and the snake because they were very cute and they were one year old. All the animals were from South America and Africa. I really didn’t want to hold the tarantula because it was hairy and it didn’t want to come out of it’s home. I was a little bit scared but I held the snake, and the bearded dragon. I’ve never held a snake or bearded dragon before – it was so COOL!”

Families brought wonderful foods for a shared lunch.

July 2024: Picnic in Highgate Woods

Following the success of previous summer picnics, five families joined together for a fun afternoon in July- dodging the rainy weather to enjoy games on the field and a picnic tea and ice cream! It was a great way to meet new families and catch up with friends.

September 2024: London Zoo

Thanks to the zoo’s community access scheme, 21 families came together for a wonder-filled visit to London Zoo in September 2024. Families met up to share lunch and stories of the animal antics, catch up with friends and meet new members.

“My favourite animal was the Komodo Dragon because of the cool method they have to kill their prey. The best part of the zoo was when we saw the Nightlife section. We had a lovely day out!” (Lorenzo)

“it was amazing to see the penguins... they looked like they were dancing in the water...” (Adam)

September 2024: Festival of Books at the British Library

The Festival of Books at the British Library was a fully accessible Family Day organised by Camden Learning, Frank Barnes School and other deaf friendly organisations, delivered in British Sign Language and spoken English. Families came to make, touch, sign and explore, create, share and celebrate stories and favourite books. Committee member and NLDCS trustee Alison and her family ran our stall Marvellous Me. Over 250 families attended and our popular mirror decorating activity encouraged children to explore their own personas.

October 2024 Autumn Party

We held a very successful Autumn party at Blanche Neville Primary School with games, stalls and a fun raffle. As usual, we invited a BSL interpreter to support activities.

December 2024: Theatre Trip

61 of us from age 5 upwards attended Chickenshed's captioned production of Pan and enjoyed a magical, colourful, inspiring and thought-provoking musical show telling the story of Peter Pan with integrated sign language. Well done to NLDCS members who were involved in the production.

Committee Activities

The committee re-elected at the AGM in May 2024 Kam Makram and Natali Collins (co-chairs), Donna Apparicio (treasurer) Zibiah Loakthar (secretary), Nosheen Akhtar (safeguarding), Esther Conway (communications), Rayan Basma, Denis Coelho, Suki Gill, Barbara Kasperska, Pari Kotecha, Lauren Rapacioli, Marvi Rauf and newly elected Laura Masino and Alison Miles. Pari Kotecha and Linda Sells, who has been involved with her family with NLDCS for the past 25 years, stood down from the committee with our thanks. This year a very big thank you to Marvi Rauf and her family for long standing support with NLDCS activities and minute taking over the past few years. Marvi is stepping down from the committee due to a move away from London but like other former committee families will always be part of the NLDCS family and we look forward to welcoming her family to activities when they are passing through London.

This year we have continued our regular committee meetings online.

Committee members continue to attend 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, deaf specific learning resources as well as other useful online links. Communications to members have 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, for instance opportunities to attend discounted theatre events and activities organised by other groups. These include BSL activities for young people at Remark! and stay and play schemes for young deaf families held at Laycock, Blanche Neville and Frank Barnes primary schools and relevant calls for participants in research studies.

We have a private **Facebook Group** for members in addition to an **Instagram** account, growing this as a way to share ideas, stories and news. Committee members are up-to-date on safeguarding issues. All hold DBS certification.

As a committee we explore different fundraising ideas and also seek out resources in kind. We were pleased to secure discounted tickets from Chickenshed and Arts Depot and London Zoo for activities again this year. A big thank you to all who have made donations to our charity and to the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) for their ongoing support.

Plans for 2025

We have already organised some successful 2025 group activities.

In February 2025, 14 families got into the competitive spirit on the bowling lanes in Finchley.

"My favourite part was coming second in our lane. We had four lanes with all children with hearing aids and cochlear implants and their families! After bowling we got to go to the arcade and it was so much fun! I like attending these events because there's lots of time to play and we can learn more about bowling and play with other deaf kids!" (Sol)

In March 2025 we organised a group visit for families to see the Egypt exhibition at the Young V and A museum in Bethnal Green. 13 deaf children and their families came together for an afternoon of creative activities and games. A visit to the exhibition Making Egypt with sections on storytelling, communicating and making, had the kids learning about the stories of the Egyptian gods, how to read and write hieroglyphs and the craftsmanship of Egyptian artisans and builders. The wider museum offered the opportunity for parents and carers to connect with each other in an exciting space and reminisce about favourite games from their childhoods.

In May 2025 we held a well-attended circus skills party for deaf children of all ages and their families at St Martins Primary School.



In the pipeline for the rest of 2025 we are planning to hold a summer family picnic in a park. We are preparing to run an activity stall again at the British Library in September and hope to organise a group visit to see Chickenshed Theatre's inclusive BSL and captioned production of Red at the end of the year.

We have also been fundraising for some other activities for this year.

As always, we welcome everyone's ideas and suggestions for activities. Watch out for news via email, our website and social media of plans for activities and outings!

CAN YOU HELP? We welcome new committee members. Our charity activities are run entirely by volunteers, the majority of whom are NLDCS parents and carers. People of all ages can join our committee at any point in the year. We welcome people with a few hours a month spare to join the team. We can offer support, mentoring and training to people who may be new to being a charity trustee. We are especially looking for people with good organisational skills to help organise events, people with experience in Mailchimp and WordPress to help with our communication, people with fundraising ideas and people with experience of deafness. We hold meetings online with enabled captioning to support our committee members who are deaf. We rotate between Monday and Thursday evenings. Committee meetings are held at 8.30pm, in the hope that by then those of us in charge of young children may have managed to put them to bed! Getting involved on a committee can be a great way to build friendships with families from across different North London boroughs.

A big thank you from the committee and all our families to everyone who has volunteered their time and expertise for the NLDCS this year. Our activities run on volunteer power. Everyone coming together to offer time ideas and resources enables NLDCS to continue to make a difference to the lives of deaf children and their families.