

HAPPY TO TRANSLATE (HTT)

Background

Happy to Translate (HTT) is a non-profit initiative, self financed through its growing membership. The logo was chosen by the BME communities through extensive consultation and surveying and was launched in 2005 by the then Minister for Communities, Malcolm Chisholm. The Government remains involved with HTT today and has a representative on the Strategic Advisory Group which meets quarterly. HTT is also a member of the Government's Translation, Interpretation & Communication Support Implementation Group (TICSIG).

There are 4 main benefits to HTT:

- Organisation related
- Community related
- Staff
- Legislative compliance.

Organisation related

HTT is a quality standard. Even organisations who already have robust translation and interpretation facilities in place display the logo because it reinforces and publicises their commitment to providing equal access to their information and services.

HTT has produced **monitoring and evaluating** procedures and systems which are available to members, the use of which enables the organisation to identify what works and what doesn't in terms of language service provision. Members participate in the **Members Forum** which facilitates the sharing of best practice and working in partnership with each other (from varied industries, e.g. police, fire and rescue, regulators, housing associations, local authorities, regulators and utilities contractors). HTT provides its members with the framework to implement procedures to support their service users in language provision. The tools available to them (**Point Pages, Appointment Sheets, Feedback Forms**) have already been translated into 20+ languages.

Community related

We are frequently asked by organisations that already have language service provision in place why they should go to the added expense of subscribing to HTT membership. In turn we ask them how do members of the public who speak little or no English know that they will receive the support they need to access the organisation's information and services. We explain that by displaying the logo prominently on their premises, on their literature and on their website, non-English speakers will approach them confident in the knowledge that their language needs will be met there. We have encountered numerous people from the BME community who - for various reasons - are already reluctant to get in touch with public bodies and service providers who can support them and make their lives a little easier. The logo is already widely recognised among the BME community here.

Staff

How a staff member who is unused to dealing with members of the BME community handles not only a language barrier, but cultural and/or gender barriers as well, could affect the outcome of future and ongoing relations with the service user. The training session we offer not only provides front line staff with the tools to engage with non-English speaking service users, but also incorporates race relations, equality and diversity issues, cultural awareness and role playing.

Legislative Compliance

Becoming a member of HTT ensures an organisation's compliance with all of the Acts relating to race relations and equality and diversity. Organisations who take up HTT membership want more than to comply with legislation; they are taking the step to strengthening relationships with the communities they serve.