

Letter to the Joint Committee on Human Rights in the UK Parliament

3 March 2022



We are people with learning disabilities and other communication needs, and the organisations that support us and our rights.



We are writing to the Joint Committee on Human Rights in the UK parliament because we want to tell you about the problems with the UK Government's consultation on the Human Rights Act.



This consultation is called Human Rights Act Reform: A Modern Bill of Rights. A consultation to reform the Human Rights Act 1998.



Ministry of
JUSTICE

It has been made by the Ministry of Justice in the UK Government.



This consultation is important to us because it is about changing how our human rights work.

We want to participate and tell the UK Government what we think.



The UK Government published the consultation on 14 December 2021.



But they did not produce an Easy Read translation.



They also did not provide any other versions like BSL, an Audio version or Makaton.





Ministry of **JUSTICE**



For the last two months lots of us have asked the UK Government for an Easy Read version of the consultation.



Ministry of **JUSTICE**



The UK Government said they had problems finding someone to make an Easy Read version.



We do not think this is a good excuse.

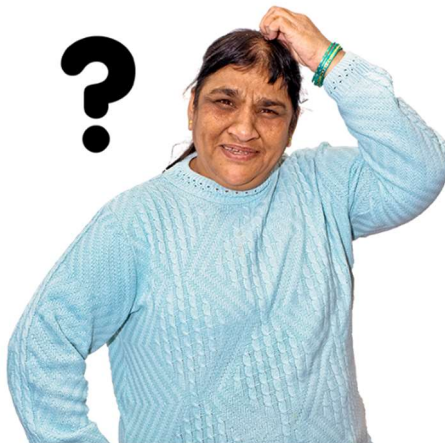


The UK Government should have waited until they could make an Easy Read version before publishing the consultation.



On the 24 February 2022 the UK Government published what it is calling an Easy Read version of the consultation.

We do not think it is Easy Read.



We think the UK Government Easy Read version of the consultation has lots of problems, including:

- it is still difficult to understand



- there is not enough information or explanation about how the law works now or what changes will happen



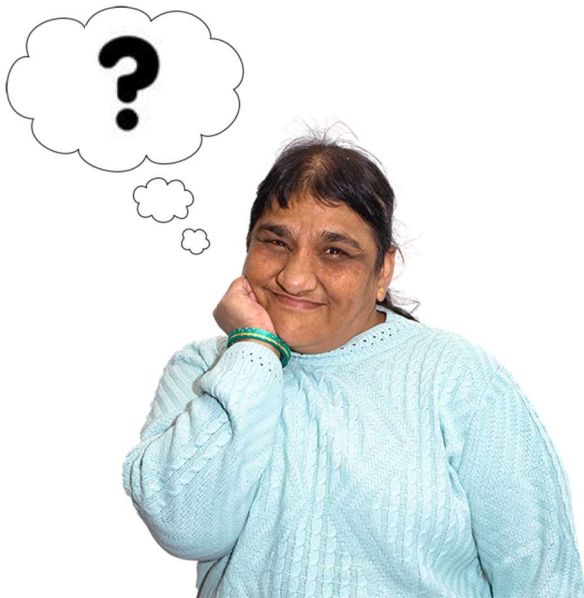
- there are no images



- there is not much evidence or facts about why changes are needed to our human rights law. Lots of questions seem to be against human rights.



One of the biggest problems is that the consultation deadline has not been changed for people who need to use the Easy Read translation. The deadline is still 8 March 2022.



This means we only have 12 days to understand the questions and to tell the UK Government what we think about changes to our human rights.



Everyone using the standard version of the consultation has had 12 weeks to think about the questions and what they want to tell the UK Government about changes to our human rights.

We think this is a problem for three reasons:



1. The Human Rights Act 1998 is the law which says we should not be treated worse than other people for lots of reasons, including because we have learning disabilities or experience communication barriers. This is discrimination.



2. The Equality Act 2010 is also a law that says we should not be discriminated against for 9 reasons, including because of disability.



Both of these laws apply to the UK Government. This means the Government should not discriminate against us when they have consultations like this one about changes to our human rights.



3. The Government has made its own guidance (called Consultation Principles) about how they should do consultations.

This says consultations should last for a proportionate amount of time.



This means there should be enough time for people to participate, especially when the consultation is about important issues.



People who need an Easy Read translation only have 12 days to understand everything and tell the UK Government their answers to the questions.

People using the standard version have had 12 weeks.



This is not fair, and we do not think it is allowed by the law. We think the actions of the UK Government are discrimination and not proportionate.



We know the Joint Committee on Human Rights is asking questions about this consultation. We want to tell you about the problems in this letter so you can ask the Ministry of Justice:



- Why it has not made a proper Easy Read translation of the Human Rights Act consultation.



- Why it had not given people who need to use the Easy Read translation the same amount of time to participate as people who use the standard version.



- Why it has not made other accessible forms of the consultation like BSL or an Audio version or Makaton.

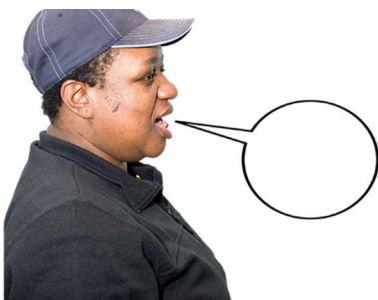


The Human Rights Act is about every person in the UK, including people with learning disabilities.



Ministry of
JUSTICE

We should all have an equal chance to tell the Ministry of Justice what we think about the changes they want to make to our rights.



This letter is from 205 individuals and organisations:

People First
Pembrokeshire People First
Warrington Speak Up
My Life My Choice
Inclusion North
Learning Disability England
All Wales People First
British Institute of Human Rights
Adam Dawkins (Individual, Self-advocate)
Adam Lane (Individual)
Adele Swindle-Phillips (Individual)
Adrian Hartley (Individual)
Aga Fortulanska (Individual)
Aisia Howard (Individual, Support provider)
Aiste Navickaite (Individual)
Alec Whitehead (individual)
Alex Tate (Individual)
Alison Giraud-Saunders (Individual, consultant)
Alvin Lane (Individual)

Andrea Mullen (Individual, Support worker)
Andrew Whitehead (individual)
Anne McMahon (Individual)
Barnaby Oliver (Individual)
Beatrice Millar (Individual, Retired Therapist)
Ben Robertson (Individual)
Cara Petch (Individual, Local Government)
Carolyn Goodall (Individual)
Casper Beade Rioseco (Individual, Support provider)
Chris Goodman (Individual)
Chris Miller (Individual Supporter)
Chris Sterry (Individual)
Christopher Varney (Individual, Member of Pembrokeshire People First)
Cindy Carter (Individual, on behalf of JC)
Claire White (Individual, Support provider)
Councillor Christine Stuart (Chessington South & Malden Rushett Ward Councillor, RBK Disability Champion)
Courtney Poupard (Individual, Member of Pembrokeshire People First and Equality Champion)

Craig Kennady (Individual, NHS worker)
David Howarth (Individual, Parent)
David Whittle (Individual, Self-advocate)
Dawn Cavanagh (PhD research student, University of South Wales; Individual Self-advocate and Parent)
Dee Morris (Individual)
Dr Alison Tarrant (Individual, Lecturer in Law)
Dr Carole Buckley
Dr Claire Bates (Individual, Support provider)
Dr Emily Kakoullis (Individual, Lecturer in Law, Cardiff University)
Dr Jill Bradshaw (Individual, Therapist and Academic)
Dr Lucy Series (Individual, Academic)
Dr Sam Chegwin (Individual, Support provider)
Eamonn Harrigan (Individual)
Elizabeth Sally McGurn (Individual, Parent)
Emily Davison (Individual, NHS worker)
Emily Gent (Individual Supporter)
Ffion Poole (Individual, Self-advocate)
Hannah Hall (Individual, NHS worker)

Henry Gilfillan (Individual, MCA/DOLS Lead)
Hilary Weaver (Individual, Parent)
Ian Croft (Individual Supporter)
Jacqueline Hughes (Individual, Parent)
James Edward McGurn (Individual, Parent)
James MacDonald (Individual)
James Tyler (Individual, Member of Pembrokeshire People First and Learning Disability Champion)
Jane Colquhoun (Individual)
Jo Hough (Individual)
Joanne McGeachin (Individual Supporter)
Joanne Whitehead (individual)
Joseph McGurn (Individual)
Julie Victoria Sharp (Individual)
Kara Williams (Individual, Self-advocate)
Karen Kirkpatrick (Individual, Support provider)
Karolina Joiner (Individual)
Kate Pupynin (Individual, Support provider)
Kath Goodman (Individual, Parent Carer)
Katy Williams (Individual, Self-advocate)

Kausar Iqbal (Individual)
Kay (Individual)
Kelsey (Individual, Self-advocate)
Kurtis Marshall (Individual, Self-advocate)
Lee Bearn (Individual, Member of Pembrokeshire People First Campaigns Group)
Linda Dickinson (Individual)
Lisa Govier (Individual)
Lisa Prewett (Individual, Support provider)
Liz Wilson (Individual)
Lorraine and Jeff Buckley (Individuals)
Lucy Hinksman (Individual, Member of Pembrokeshire People First and Easy Read Champion)
Lynne Evans (Individual, Self-advocate)
Margaret Louise O'Keeffe (Individual)
Martin Robertson (Individual)
Matt Howard (Individual)
Michael Loat (Individual, Associate Member of Pembrokeshire People First (Ceredigion))
Michelle Dami-Johnson (Individual, Social Worker)
Neil & Ann Williams (Individual, Self-advocate)

Neil Carpenter (Individual)
Nicola Benstead (Individual)
Pam Robertson (Individual, Parent)
Paula Jenkins (Individual, Family Carer)
Peter Loose (Individual)
Phil Morgan (Individual, Parent)
Philip Adams, MCLIP (Individual)
Professor Anna Lawson (Individual, Professor of Law)
Professor Chris Hatton (Academic, Manchester Metropolitan University)
Professor Luke Clements (Individual, Cerebra Professor of Law and Social Justice)
Rachel Curtis (Individual)
Rachel Pilling (Individual, NHS worker)
Ramandeep Kaur (Individual, Parent)
Rebecca Helliard (Individual)
Rebecca Morgan (Individual)
Richard Redmond (Individual, Self-advocate)
Richard Williams (Individual, Self-advocate)
Rob Greig (Member of the Representative Body of Learning Disability England and former

Government National Director for Learning Disabilities)
Rob Poloha (Individual)
Ros Cheetham
Rosalind Grainger (Individual, Therapist))
Sally Evants (Individual)
Ruth Clatworthy (Individual, Family supporter)
Sally Malit (Individual, Supporter)
Sara Kent (Individual)
Sarah Eccles (Individual, Support provider)
Sarah Lee (Individual, Support provider)
Sarah Wheatley (Individual Supporter)
Sharon Robertson (Individual Supporter)
Shirley Durell (Individual)
Simon Burdis (Individual)
Simon Richards (Individual, Self-advocate)
Stacey Atkinson (Individual, NHS worker)
Stacey Traylor (Individual, Self-advocate)
Sue Harradine (Individual, Parent)
Sue Rzepczynski (Individual)
Sue Turner (Individual, Supporter)

Ted Goodman (Individual, Parent Carer)
Tina Law (Individual)
Vanessa Glasgow (Individual, Support worker)
Action on Disability
Advocacy West Wales – Eiriolaeth Gorllewin Cymru
Bromley Experts by Experience
Building Bridges
Caerphilly People First
Carmarthenshire People First
C-Change
Ceredigion Young Voices for Choices
Challenging Behaviour Foundation
Cheshire Disabled People Against Cuts
Clynfyw
Community Policy Forum
Conwy Connect for People with Learning Disabilities
Darlington Association on Disability
Darlington's Peoples Parliament
Dates n Mates Scotland
Deafness Support Network

Disability Equality Scotland
Disability Positive
Disabled People Against Cuts Sheffield
Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd
Down's Syndrome Association
Early Years Equality
Equalities and Human Rights UK
Exclusively Inclusive
Fairoak Housing Association
Friends Action North East
Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled Peoples
Hear Me Out Participation Group
Inclusion East CIC
Inclusion London
Inclusion Scotland
KeyRing
Kirklees Involvement Network
L'Arche London
Lewisham Speaking Up
Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living

Middlesbrough First
National Autistic Taskforce
New Prospects Association
North Lincolnshire Learning Disability Partnership
North Yorkshire Learning Disability Partnership Board
Northern Lights
Pathways Associates
People First Dorset
People First Keighley & Craven
People's Choice Group
Prestatyn Self-Advocacy Group
Richmond Aid
SCLD (Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities)
SeeAbility
Skills for People
Speak Out in Hounslow
Speaking Up Together
SPECTRUM Centre for Independent Living in Southampton
Sunderland People First

Supported Loving, Choices Support
The Robin Centre
Together Matters
UNJUST
Vivo Care Choices
Wednesday's Voice Barnsley
Your Voice Advocacy & West Glamorgan People First
Article 39
Big Brother Watch
CAJ

Just Fair
JUSTICE
Latin American Women's Rights Service
Liberty
Quakers in Britain
Real
Rights & Security International
Rights of Women
the ALLIANCE

The contact for this letter is Sanchita Hosali, CEO, The British Institute of Human Rights. Please email Sanchita on director@bihr.org.uk

The British Institute of Human Rights is a registered charity (1101575)
www.bihhr.org.uk