

# 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  
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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.

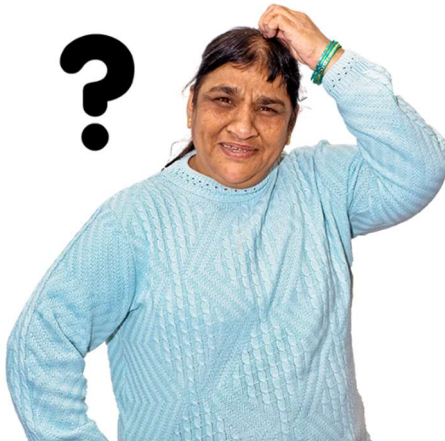


The UK Government should have waited until they could make an Easy Read version before publishing the consultation.



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 explanations about how the law works now or what changes will happen
- there are no images



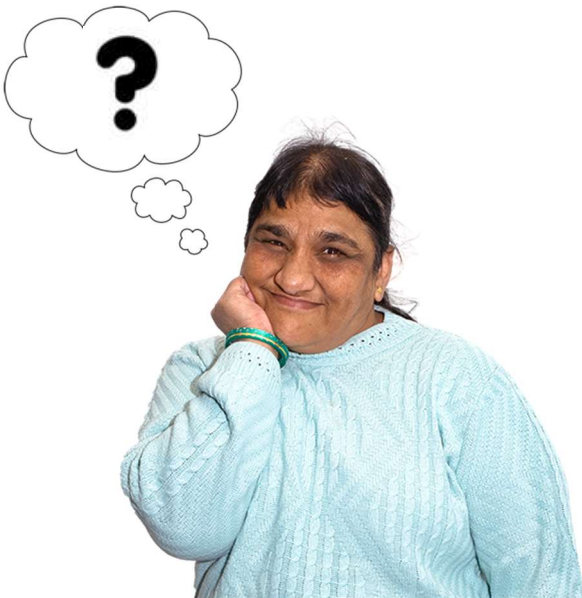




- there is not much evidence or facts about why changes are needed to our human rights law. Lots of questions seem to be against human rights.



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.





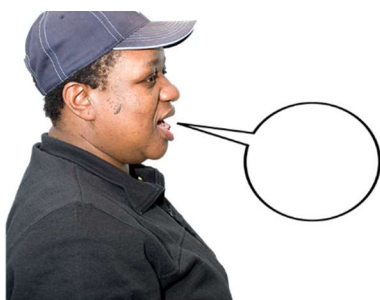
- Why it has not made other accessible forms of the consultation like BSL or an Audio version or Makaton.



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



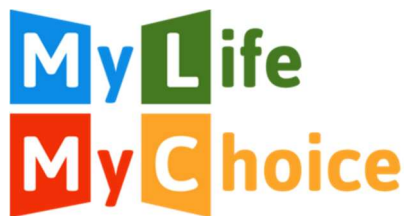
Ministry of  
**JUSTICE**



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:



My Life My Choice



Pembrokeshire People First



Inclusion North



Learning Disability England



Warrington Speak Up



The British Institute of Human Rights



All Wales People First

Individual people have signed up as well. We will add their names to the letter before we send it to the Joint Committee on Human Rights.

If more people with learning disabilities and other communication needs, and the organisations that support us and our rights want to sign the letter, you can.

Please send an email to Sanchita [director@bihr.org.uk](mailto:director@bihr.org.uk) to say if you want to join the letter. Please email Sanchita by 11am on Thursday 3 March. Thank you.