

# All Our Rights In Law: These are our messages.

All Our Rights In Law was a project to gather views from people around Scotland about proposals for a new human rights law being developed by the National Taskforce on Human Rights Leadership.

Around 430 people took part in around 35 community conversations, which took place online due to COVID-19 restrictions.

You can read about who took part in these conversations and a summary of key points raised in them, at [www.hrcscotland.org](http://www.hrcscotland.org)

During the project, people were asked 'What is your final message to the National Taskforce and the Scottish Government?' This is what they said.

1. The onus should not be put on those who are already struggling but should be for the services to make sure their rights are realised.
2. Who is going to take the local authority to court if you don't know how to do it or if your energy is already zapped?
3. Human rights are a golden thread that sits in everything we do so actually every staff member has to have a decent enough knowledge to provide that advocacy support because you never know when it is needed.
4. Consult with different groups to understand their needs, be open and willing to act on what they share.
5. Inclusive Communication to be at the heart of the work of the National Taskforce, Scottish Government and any new Human Rights Bill. Work needs to be person-centred and rights-based with communication being seen as a basic human right. Inclusive Communication is essential if each citizen in Scotland is to understand and access all their human rights. Public bodies need to respect people's language/communication support needs in order that the duty bearers ensure that the rights holders access their rights in a timely manner. Inclusive Communication is not about disability; it is about how we all communicate with each other at all times and the Scottish Government should be leading the way forward on this.



6. There should be a national deaf awareness campaign which includes teaching children how to protect their hearing. This campaign needs to be led by government and be inclusive of all four pillars of deafness, the barriers people face, the discrimination brought by attitude to deafness, and provide practical support in language/communication.
7. This legislation must have impact. This legislation and conversations around it must not be 'virtue signalling.'
8. This legislative development must have human rights and equalities in practice at its core and must not merely symbolise this. This must not be the 'bureaucratisation of rights,' as though writing about how things might get better is the work in and of itself.
9. Institutions must recognise their part to play in structural discrimination, and in the potential bettering of lives.
10. Material conditions affect how and if people are able to 'claim their rights.' This must be recognised.
11. It is important to follow through with legislative development in this area and avoid public consultation without action. There is a distrust from the community about promises made previously and broken concerning consultation and legislative development.
12. Ensure that legislation cannot be repealed by future party political leaders.
13. It is important to have timely reviews of the legislation, and equality impact assessments must be carried out in development.
14. Push to look at case law internationally.
15. There must be no uncertainty or legislation that is open to misinterpretation or abuse.
16. Think about the impact of this law on longer-term choices, think about the impact in the longer-term.
17. Most of the laws you are looking at would benefit a lot of countries.
18. The law is a first step – the real work starts now to get it in place and implemented.
19. Welcome the work so far – and we need the right framework - but we need the detail of the law and mechanisms in place to gain traction for people who are experiencing abuses.
20. Simplify the law and make it accessible.
21. Make sure the law is not tokenistic or a flashy vote winner.
22. Human Rights champions in every Scottish Government department.
23. This is not just about the law – it's about culture change.
24. Can we get the Scottish Human Rights Commission to be a muscular regulator on rights, with more powers please?



25. Scotland as a human rights nation – and this should trickle all the way down to the bottom.
26. Be bold. Be brave. Be courageous. This is a tremendous opportunity to shape a different future for people
27. Acts being well connected and thought through. The new act not being a substitute for an ongoing programme of review of existing legislation. Otherwise, if it has to rely on people making legal challenges about the incompatibility of current legislation, then that's going to take a long time and be very difficult.
28. Make it as accessible as possible to the people who rights will be most affected.
29. You need to go out to people to ensure they know about their rights and where to go for more info or advice. Educate, educate, educate! For everyone.
30. Results are what will count in the end – just that.
31. Bridge the disconnect – between aspirations of international treaties, national policy intentions and local delivery.
32. Communicate, collaborate and co-produce – disabled people are an asset (not a burden) and lived experience is invaluable.
33. Transitions for people with learning disability – there are not enough placements for people, and they do not have enough support. People should have a choice of what they want to do. They should not be forced to do something they do not want to.
34. We must have the resources to be able to effectively implement the law.
35. The new law needs to be well promoted through media so that there is public awareness.
36. Awareness and education needs to start from an early age.
37. Review and address existing issues, including those highlighted by the UN in its 2017 report on the UK.
38. There needs to be effective remedies in place when rights are breached – people need to see things change as a result and public bodies need to be seen to be held to account.
39. These things take time – government needs to be realistic about that but it is not a reason not to do it. It needs to be properly thought about and the infrastructure needs to be there.
40. The positive aspect of human rights needs to be highlighted. People need to know how it can work positively for individuals – there is so much negative press on human rights which creates an atmosphere of tension and negativity. New human rights law should have a positive spin on how it can work in a positive manner.



41. Information must be accessible for all and available in formats that are easy to access.
42. Consult us, talk to us, ask questions, share information – everyone should be involved, and it should be accessible to everyone. We are the ones on the ground so keep the consultation open.
43. Enforcement, Enforcement, Enforcement! The law needs to be meaningful and enforceable – if the laws we already have worked, then we would not be having this conversation.
44. This law needs to cover social media outlets so that bullying on social media can be tackled.
45. Be bold. Go on. That's a great message.
46. Your rights are your rights and you should not be humiliated in order to access or achieve them.
47. Implement and action it.
48. We need laws on religious and cultural tolerance, plus Scotland has a real issue with sectarianism within the Scottish community – a law on this is needed.
49. Make sure you make the action to access human rights simple, easy, cheap, and well known by everyone.
50. Actually follow through and make it accessible and available.
51. Monitoring systems with regular reviews to measure improvement and ever-increasing protection of the socio-economic rights implemented.
52. Treat people with respect and kindness.
53. Our final message is that we expect to be treated as adult citizens of our country and not as children, not as poor unfortunates who need looked after, not as people who are dangerous to the community. We are impatient that it is taking so long for our citizenship rights to be recognised and for the UN Convention requirements to be met by our country. We hoped that Scotland would want to be a progressive nation, looking out for all of its citizens and prepared to take bold steps to move away from oppressive laws and practices. We very much welcome the Scottish Government's commitment to secure a Human Rights Framework for its citizens. We do not want to be left behind again. (People First Scotland)
54. Follow what we said today, educate communities by empowering them.
55. Invest in people to speak up and make it real.
56. We need laws about bank accounts and access to them.
57. More training and information to communities.
58. Getting it into law will be a long and complicated processes so continue to pave the way through consultation, education, empowerment and changing attitudes. Bringing the people with you could quicken up the process.



59. Create community champions and give leaders more financial support to empower their members.
60. I would like to see the new human rights replace the excuses the MSPs make about 'we don't have the powers to change this and that'.
61. We want to increase awareness of human rights to everyone in society so that it is fully understood so that people and organisations don't breach human rights in the first place, as they know what human rights are and that they know that it is wrong to breach people's and groups' human rights in the first place, and will actively seek to identify human rights issues and be proactive and act before a human rights breach and issue occurs.
62. We would ask the National Taskforce and the Scottish Government to take seriously, and be brave in thinking about, the implications of a new human rights law for Scotland. The ambition suggested in this consultation is sincerely welcomed. The right to housing, to a healthy environment, to food, to good physical and mental health etc. are highly significant but costly, and if they are to be meaningful, they must be meaningfully resourced. In addition, we recognise that to realise the benefits promised by these rights will require much more than legislation. Consideration about how as a society we can foster and support the relationships that will meet the spirit, and not just the letter, of these rights must happen in parallel with the legislative process.
63. Accountability, sustainability, commitment to resources. Really back up what you're saying in order that the practical resources are out there. Not enough to pass a law but to make it work.
64. FREDA principles should be adhered to – stands for fairness, respect, dignity and autonomy. Put them at the heart of human rights – it doesn't have to be complicated.
65. Put a responsibility on everyone – it's tempting to say someone else is dealing with it.
66. Importance of engaging with those who are most at risk. People who should be heard in this discussion may not know about it – how do they hear about it?
67. Make sure that we find and listen to voices – we are not listened to.
68. Is it performative or substantial? It has to be a powerful process that people really understand – it would be better if I can do things that are simple to challenge it – “where do I go and who do I talk to” – but having the courts as backup.
69. There needs to be a way that people know what their rights are and know what to do when they are violated.
70. What is the bar/the standard – how is it decided? e.g. health, how do we unpack it? A right to food, and a right to safe, warm, dry housing.



71. Agencies must work together to solve violations, no passing the buck.
72. We need to aim high.
73. It is not just communities that need to be better, it is those in power too. We talk about capacity building – that means capacity and building capacity of people in power, policy makers etc. If we don't do this nothing will change. "I can't fix racism as an individual until white people get it".
74. The fixing must happen "up there".
75. Don't just listen to the loudest voices.
76. Avoid practices which might be discriminatory.
77. Be careful to ensure that human rights implementation is fair and open.
78. Make bias explicit.
79. Positive discrimination is an unresolved tension in the debate.
80. Keep going! There has been so much progress made that we don't want to lose the momentum. There are laudable aspirations – let's not lose them during the legislation process.
81. Utopianism is good!
82. The voluntary/NGO sector is one of the strongest allies we should be working with and through – use the voluntary/NGO sector to best advantage.
83. Don't create a human rights law that will sit on the shelf.
84. Help people to understand what their rights are and encourage organisations to be proactive around human rights, not reactive – by that time it is too late.
85. Bring the concept of co-production front and centre to societal shifts – laws, engagement, inclusion, in a meaningful and relevant way. We live in a great country but there's always room for improvement.
86. If you are going to do this, do it well and make something that will change people's lives in a meaningful way!
87. Start with those voices that have not been heard before and look at the unequitable level of resource distributed between differing sectors.
88. We really need human rights law that is not as complex as the current one.
89. People who are blind or partially sighted can advocate for themselves. There should be a safety-net but they are capable of standing up for themselves.
90. Human rights are essential to modern democracy. It makes Scotland a much fairer and more equal place. It encapsulates so much of what people have worked for on various issues.
91. UNCRC Incorporation has changed my life completely. I worked with Young Scot to feed into the Scottish Government CRC consultations. This led me to get more involved in rights and youth work and it has changed everything.
92. There needs to be research into why current human rights law is not effective.



93. We shouldn't have to campaign for decades to have access to these rights. We've had these rights for a long time, this should have happened when we ratified them as that shows that we believe that people should have them.
94. This would be life-changing to so many from all different backgrounds. It can change people's lives. It can give actual rights that you can access.
95. There is nothing that isn't good about having human rights in law. They weren't created to not be respected. They were created so people could have these rights and make the world a better place.
96. Thank you for listening to us but please make sure you listen to us all as separate groups and not lumped together as one big group. (Scottish Youth Parliament)
97. Human rights are imperative and directly related to dignity.
98. We need to incorporate these as fully and directly as possible now.
99. Make sure they listen to as many people as possible.
100. The judicial system needs better processes to actualise these new laws.
101. The Government should be bold and not wilt in the face of loud people on Twitter opposing human rights.
102. Human rights should be linked to the Sustainable Development Goals.
103. Involve the experts by experience.
104. Make this happen with haste but as a robust process.
105. Really think about funding for third sector organisations as they are the people helping individuals at ground level.
106. The main message is that these rights must be truly implemented, properly enforced and monitored.
107. Migrants should benefit from human rights exactly the same as Scottish nationals.
108. Differences must be celebrated and cultural awareness can be used to improve the way that rights can be enforced or enhanced, leading by example and best practice, as it is done in so many other fields through international collaboration.
109. Continue pressing the UK Government on immigration issues as these are affecting human rights of many people.
110. 'All our rights in law' should become a reality and have a positive/real impact in the lives of migrants.
111. Create a legal and social system where all citizens are equal.
112. Give all immigrants the same rights as citizens, and end the immigration health surcharge.
113. The Taskforce needs to be in touch with reality – they need members of the public and people that these laws will affect, to be on the Taskforce. The Government should listen to these people about what they actually need, not what politicians think they need.



114. The Government must not treat people as objects but as people – no more cutbacks so that people are living on nothing. There should be basic standards for everyone.
115. Humanity should be at the centre of how decisions are made, not finance.
116. I think the Taskforce and Government need to speak to the people it affects most, hearing the hard truth will make them make the right decisions. I think if it doesn't personally affect you, you are naive to the impact but you need to hear it first-hand.
117. Please use this opportunity to make a difference to our country. You have an opportunity to change some of the hideous state that our country is in.
118. The Scottish Government and the Taskforce need to put themselves in the shoes of the people that are suffering, homeless, can't make ends meet, having their human rights taken away from them – most of the time new law is written on paper but not adhered to – if they think about that, then the world will be a better place.
119. The Taskforce and Government should ensure that this process will not lose any of the rights that currently exist. This new law needs to challenge some of the oppression that people experience and that it is acknowledged as that – it is about oppression of people's human rights and looking at what that means on the ground.
120. The Taskforce need to gather their information directly from people that are affected, not from bar charts and spreadsheets.
121. There is a need for shorter/faster communication channels between communities, Taskforce and Government
122. No bureaucracy – Listen and make it happen. Get it done.
123. If you want to achieve an equal & healthy/happy Scotland, with justice for all, you need to enshrine the right to food in Scots law or else hunger is what Scotland offers its people.
124. With brexit in mind – Support our local farmers and local producers
125. Right to food is an universal idea and need to make sure it's reflected in the language and practical ways that are implemented. Everyone knows that it's about everyone, not just people that are worse off. And they thought about all of the barriers.
126. The role of community based organisations and community based activity is critical and should be supported and promoted – they must be involved in the local discussion regarding how best to reach and support the especially vulnerable groups.

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127. A plea: Please don't forget about the workers and the elderly when looking at people's right to food. Currently we consider these groups are less visible – though not less in need.
  128. We believe that there is a general political willingness to support human rights in Scotland and we would therefore support a maximal approach to incorporation of international human rights law into Scots law.



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