Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill:
Access to Technology

Easy Read

December 2023
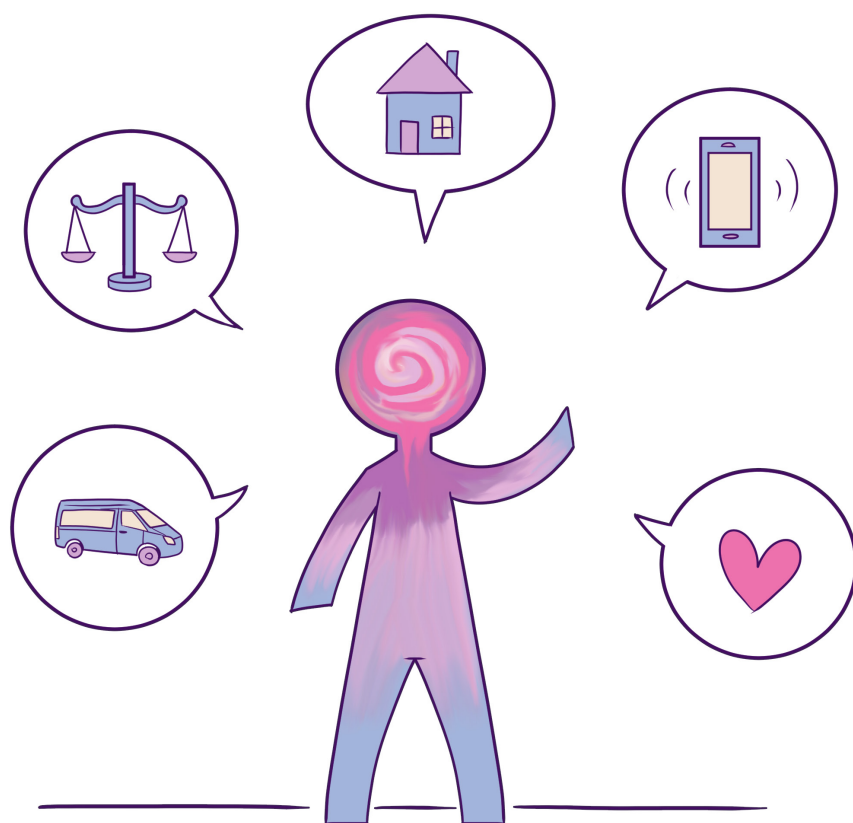
Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence (LDAN) Bill

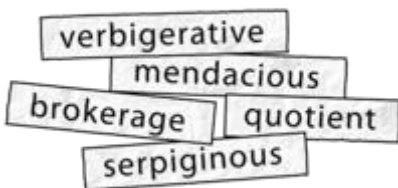## Access to Technology

Easy Read

Digital Access is being able to use technology.
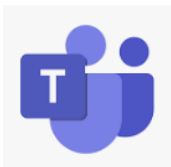
Digital means electronic technology.

This includes things that happen online.

Access means a way in.

Technology means electronic devices.

Examples of technology include:

- Phones

- Computers

- Social media

- Zoom calls

- Teams calls.

These are services that support us to talk to each other online.

Technology is important because we all use digital equipment much more in our lives.

People use technology to:

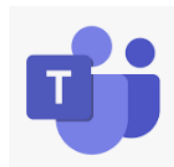- keep in touch with family and friends

- get a job

- increase independence.

The Covid-19 pandemic made many people use technology more because many services went **online.**

Online means using the internet.

Many neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities had never used Zoom or Teams before the pandemic.

For some people technology has made things more accessible.

Some people do not have access to technology.

There are many people with learning disabilities who do not have digital devices.

There are many people with learning disabilities who need support to access and use technology.

What did the Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP) think?

The **Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP)** is a group made up of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities to help advise the Scottish Government on this Consultation.

Some LEAP members thought that technology is very important.

Some people can be taken advantage of online.

For example, **fraud** and **scams.**

Fraud means someone taking your money without your permission.

Scams means anyway someone uses to take money from you.

Sometimes people with learning disabilities have their **Wi-Fi** and digital services taken away from them.

This is wrong.
Wi-Fi is what you need to be able to use the internet.

Keeping safe online is important to people.

More information and data are needed on the use of technology by people with learning disabilities and neurodivergent people.
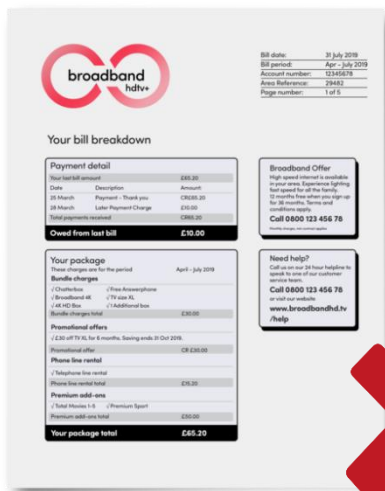
LEAP members said that some people can access technology, only with support.

More support is needed to help neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities access technology.

Barriers to digital access are:

- availability

- cost

- permission

- usability.

Other things to consider for Learning Disability and Neurodivergent groups:

- The needs of older people

- People with poor **internet** connection

- People living in the countryside

- People who struggle to process information on screen.

Education is important to help people keep safe online.

Controls and strict security settings could help keep people safe.

Accessible software that makes it easier for neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities to have digital access should be widely available.

Where do the Scottish Government want to get to?

The Scottish Government wants **Digital Incluson** for everyone in Scotland.

Digital Inclusion is when everyone can get online and access digital technology.

The Scottish Government want people with learning disabilities to be safe and confident when they are online.

What happens now?

The Scottish Government Digital Strategy aims to provide digital technology and **connectivity** to those who need it.

Connectivity means having an internet connection so that you can use your digital devices.

During the pandemic Connecting Scotland provided people with disabilities with:

- Digital devices
- Internet connectivity
- Training to get connected
- Training to use digital devices.

This meant more people with learning disabilities got involved online.

The Scottish Government want to keep going with the Connecting Scotland Programme.

The Connecting Scotland Programme could help people with learning disabilities get training on how to use digital devices.

The Connecting Scotland Programme could help people with learning disabilities get training on keeping safe online.

It is important that there are other ways people with learning disabilities can be involved that are not digital.

What can the Scottish Government do about it?

The Connecting Scotland programme gives funding to social housing organisations to buy technology and connectivity.

The Scottish Government know that there is a need for training on digital inclusion.

The Scottish Government know that training for keeping safe online is important.

The Scottish Government should make sure that people with learning disabilities who do not have access to digital technology can still take part in making policy.

What can the Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence (LDAN) Bill do?

The Bill could make sure that neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities get training on:

- Digital skills
- Online safety.

Another part of the Bill will be about **inclusive communications**.

Inclusive communications are all the different ways people use to get information.
For example, Easy Read, Audio, British Sign Language, Braille.

Better inclusive communications will help people with digital access.

Another part of the Bill could make sure that services provide inclusive communications for people who do not use digital technology.

The Bill could gather data on the number of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities who use technology.

The Bill could make more support available to help neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities access and use technology.

What do you think?

1. Which of these proposals do you agree with? Please tell us why.

2. Which of these proposals do you not agree with? Please tell us why.

3. Is there anything else that we should consider which is relevant to this topic?