

# CITIZEN, DEMOCRACY AND CONSTITUTION

## REFORM FOR BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

2024 DRAFT

### CITIZENS' CHARTER OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL RIGHTS

Practical steps for better ways to run our country  
Spread and debate this to promote meaningful reform

In our UK state the "highest level operating system" is flawed, unfit for purpose. For better quality of democracy and government we must act to affirm fundamental principles and clarify basic (constitutional) law. Here in brief are some practical ways to start:

Most British people wish for and would support more effective ways to improve the quality of our government, democracy, political rights and state constitution. To achieve this aim (better quality governance) we will name here some important steps for urgent consideration, for public and official debate:

1. **Our right to democracy** and the right of citizens to take part in government, our **political rights**, are not clearly defined in law or constitution: This must be corrected. Our constructive proposal follows here (item 2).

2. A **Bill of People's Rights shall guarantee in constitutional law: The United Kingdom is a democracy** where all power in the state belongs to and emanates from the people; the people are "sovereign" (see item 6.). To date our UK state has been declared to be a "constitutional monarchy".

3. **Prerogative: All state powers** and executive (government or "crown") practice shall be subject to direct\* and indirect\*\* democracy with scrutiny, control and rule. This principle applies to those "prerogative" powers which over the years have been "taken over" by prime minister or government as well as to any "royal prerogative" powers which formally belong to the monarchy.

\* direct refers to action by citizens \*\* indirect refers to action by elected parliaments.

4. The **parliamentary House of Lords HoL** shall be reformed according to democratic principle. Hereditary, religious and any other non-democratic rights to sit in the HoL shall be immediately abolished and annulled.

5. **Head of State:** Monarchy as head of state cannot co-exist well with modern, fair and effective democracy. Some argue for the introduction of a republic with abolition of monarchy. A compromise as follows has been proposed: "... the Crown must be reinvented as a ceremonial figure-head, with many of the Crown's powers passed to parliament."

6. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights\* (ICCPR) is legally binding and was ratified by the UK in 1976. The Covenant has been accepted by 173 countries. In Article 25 we find:

**"Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity (....) To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives"**

This fundamental, constitutional right to high-quality democracy must be activated in public life for all citizens and at all levels of government. Ways for us to take part in our own governments, beyond voting once in a few years for MPs and councillors, must be effective, accessible and "user friendly"!

\* International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is legally binding on countries which have ratified.

Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly December 1966, entry into force 23 March 1976. [United Nations source](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx) <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx>

Above text as PDF <http://www.iniref.org/GovernanceC21.pdf> OR <http://home.snafu.de/mjm/GovernanceC21.pdf>

**The above draft charter should be widely circulated with requests for debate and suggestions for improvement. Effectively deliberated and refined, the text can be published and distributed with a call to act, to build a focussed movement and political lobby for reform.**

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