

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

My Vote My Voice (MVMV) is a campaign advocating for the accessibility of democratic participation for people with learning disabilities and autism in the United Kingdom. MVMV is led by our Steering Group, a group of people with lived experience of learning disabilities and autism from across several organisations including United Response, Dimensions, and Mencap.

During the Summer and Autumn of 2025, we spoke with 25 people with learning disabilities to understand their experiences of voting and other forms of political participation. Participants wanted to increase their democratic participation but have consistently faced systemic barriers.

Our conversations highlight a wide accessibility gap across our democratic system. Most participants had never encountered accessible campaign and voting materials like manifestos or leaflets in Easy Read, accessible formats of ballot paper, and accessible mainstream media resources. Thus, forcing participants to heavily rely on others to understand political issues. This raises questions of impartiality and concerns over the lack of civic education among the general population, especially for SEND voters.

To address these structural barriers, our research points to a clear need for systemic change:

- Accessible voter, campaign, and mainstream media information
- Improved communication standards for political actors
- Stronger inclusive civic education
- Accessible routes for digital and non-digital engagement
- Support for confident in-person voting, and
- Broader inclusion of disabled people in political representation, including encouraging sitting politicians to openly disclose if they have disabilities, and more importantly encouraging disabled people to run for elected office at all levels of government and their employment and inclusion at all levels of policymaking.

These systemic changes will require coordinated collaboration from policymakers, electoral bodies, and civil society to ensure people with learning disabilities can participate fully and independently in our democracy. Investing in an accessible democracy will not only increase participation among disabled residents but will strengthen our democratic legitimacy and inclusion for the wider population.

This report was written by Patti Garcia Gomez, *Project and Engagement Coordinator, My Vote My Voice - November 2025.*

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INTRODUCTION

During the summer and autumn of 2025, My Vote My Voice set out to dive deeper to learn more about experiences of people with learning disabilities when it comes to voting and being able to meaningfully participate in our democracy. The main themes we explored include:

- Barriers and enablers to voting
- Representation and feeling heard
- Information ecosystems and trust
- Defining co-design within the learning-disabled community

These themes were derived from our previous research including our most recent local elections campaign with support from The Electoral Commission. During this local election campaigns, we aimed to:

- Continue to grow our coalition
- Encourage voter registrations among people with learning disabilities and autism,
- Amplify our new co-created easy read resources focusing on local government, voting and civic engagement.

By the end of this campaign, we realised that people are not usually very interested in local elections. We wanted to understand why, and what we could do to make people increase their democratic participation beyond the general election.

My Vote My Voice's Steering Group met to brainstorm and discuss the questions we wanted to explore during the focus group sessions. We developed nearly 30 questions that we wanted to explore further. A discussion guide was drafted and shared back with the Steering Group for review. You can find the full discussion guide in Appendix A

We had 25 participants. The participants were spread across the following two locations:

- Mansfield (Nottingham): 18 participants
- Teddington/Richmond (London): 7 participants

During recruitment, we specified that we were most interested in speaking with participants that had not heard of MVMV before. This is so we could understand the challenges experienced by people who were less familiar with voting and democratic participation.

With the consent of participants, the conversations were recorded on the conversation leads mobile device. Microsoft Word was used to automatically create the transcripts

and saved in a secure location. The recordings were deleted from the conversation leads mobile device. Miro was used for clustering analysis.

RESULTS:

1. Enablers and Barriers to Voting:

Participants who had voted in the past had normally had positive experiences. The understood the difference this could make to them and the wider community.

“People with learning disabilities should vote, they need to speak out for themselves.”

However, most had not voted before, especially not in local elections. Mainly due to the lack of accessible resources, feeling unable to vote independently, or feeling like it wasn't worth it as they were unlikely to make a difference.

Participants who had voted before:

For participants that had voted in the past, most had had a positive experience. Saying that they felt **“happy” “powerful” “strong”** when they voted.

“I feel like I am on top of the world after I vote”

Voting by post was more comfortable and often the method used by the participants. However, many said they would prefer to be able to vote in person, if only it was more accessible to them.

When asked what participants would say to others to encourage them to vote, participants often said they would share that it was a positive and empowering experience.

“By voting, you have everything to gain and nothing to lose.”

“Just do it, VOTE!”

Participants who hadn't voted before or had limited experience doing it:

For those that had not voted in person, they felt that it would be helpful to be able to visit the polling station before voting day. This would help them familiarise themselves with the travel route, as well as knowing what they needed to do on voting day, including bringing an appropriate ID with them.

Additionally, some participants felt like polling station staff needed more training on how to support people with learning disabilities to take part in this important democratic exercise. It could be worth exploring polling clerks meeting with people with learning disabilities in their community in the lead up to voting day. This could help both

parties be more familiar with each other and better know what to do on the day. Participants felt that being able to be accompanied by someone like a family member or their support worker inside the voting booth would help them feel secure.

“I don't think my voice will be heard.”

Others who hadn't voted before said that they didn't feel like it would make a difference, that politicians didn't keep their promises, and only cared about disabled people when it came to campaigning and getting elected.

Inaccessibility of voting materials:

A recurring theme was the inaccessibility of campaign and voting materials. Many participants mentioned that they need manifestos, voter registration forms, ballot paper and other campaign materials to be made available in accessible formats including Easy Read, Braille, and text to speech software.

“I need help understanding manifestos before I go to vote.”

“I just don't understand it”

“I don't have enough information.”

A request that comes up in just about every conversation and discussion around accessibility of voting for people with learning disabilities is that manifestos and campaigning materials from candidates should be made available in accessible formats so that voters can feel well informed about the issues candidates care about, and whether they feel like the candidate has their best interest in mind. Manifestos and campaign materials are very seldomly made available in Easy Read and other accessible formats. This is true at the National and even more so the local government level. All participants saying they hadn't seen manifestos or campaign materials presented in a format that they found accessible.

Some people are unable to write, and others have a complex combination of conditions. This, however, should not impede people with disabilities from voting or participating in our democracy. For example, we often wonder why blind people or those with the inability to write would be the only voters denied their right to a private vote due to the inaccessibility of ballots.

2. Representation and feeling heard

Overall participants felt a strong sense of exclusion. Like they weren't being listened to, communicated with in accessible ways, or considered beyond empty promises during campaigns. There was a strong desire to keeping politicians accountable to these commitments.

However, participants that had met their MP or local councillor face to face marked this as a very impactful experience that will stay with them for many years to come.

Feeling of exclusion

Participants felt like politicians were not communicating in accessible ways.

Participants felt that MPs, Councillors, electoral candidates, and their staff should use Easy Read, BSL, Makaton, Braille, and other accessible formats.

“Politicians should communicate with me in ways that I can understand.”

Participants emphasised that people with disabilities including those with learning disabilities want to be involved in politics. This is not limited to voting but also hold elected roles themselves but there isn’t information out there in accessible formats to support disabled people to run for election.

Should people with disabilities hold an elected role, there is also the consideration of the accessibility of the buildings, while still respecting and maintaining the independence and dignity of people with disabilities.

“People with disabilities are basically invisible”

Representation

Most participants couldn’t name a politician that publicly states to have a disability, and none could name a politician with learning disabilities in the UK. It is difficult to believe that so few politicians have a disability, but rather it is more likely that politicians are not publicly disclosing this information due to stigma or fear of discrimination.

Representation and solidarity matters. It could encourage many future generations of people with disabilities to feel like they can make a difference, take part in democracy in meaningful ways beyond voting, including running and sitting for an elected office.

**“They should put someone that is disabled in power,
someone that can speak for us.”**

Politicians that identify as disabled, should be encouraged to share this information to help dismantle the prejudice and limitations placed upon other disabled people.

Contact with politicians:

Only two of all participants had ever written to their MP. In both cases they felt like they were not listened to, they felt written off, and felt like the response took too long. They had found the response unhelpful and left them more confused than they originally were.

However, many had met their MP or local councillor in person. In most cases, this interaction happened when their support provider had organised a meet and greet at their community centre. In other cases, they had met them as candidates during their campaign. This was very impactful and important to participants, and we recommend ramping up efforts like this.

What would make you feel heard and included?

“Politicians make promises they never commit to.”

Many participants felt that MPs, Councillors and candidates should spend more time with people with disabilities, ask and listen to their needs. More importantly, participants felt that politicians should be held accountable for the promises they’ve made during campaigns, especially to the disabled community.

“They keep closing down services [that we need to survive].”

“They keep taking our jobs” - Participant talking about the importance of right to work and employability schemes for people with disabilities.

3. Information ecosystems and trust

Participants mentioned how lost they feel when trying to navigate a complex system. They felt like it was excluding them and their experiences and those of their loved ones had discouraged them from further democratic participation.

It is abundantly clear that participants and the general population in general needs further education and informational campaigns on civic and democratic education. This is not isolated to young disabled people but is observable in people of all ages and abilities.

People felt most comfortable discussing and learning from people they already trust. Like their families, friends, and support workers. The learning-disabled community is particularly isolated as many lack access to internet, email, and social media.

Navigating a complex system:

A common challenge faced by participants and the people who support them, is understanding who is best placed to be contacted with their concern.

One participant shared the instance when they contacted their MP with issues about accessibility concerns of pavements in their local area. After a few weeks, the MP responded with the directive of contacting their local councillor. Though this information is correct, the participant felt disillusioned that the MP didn’t say anything further about how to contact their local councillor or share a message of support or concern for the person’s wellbeing. This experience discouraged them, and they found

it quite difficult to find the information needed to engage with their local government through the correct avenue and in the correct format.

It is highly unlikely that this would have been the first email the MP had received about an issue or concern within the remit of local government. Surely all politicians should be interested in increasing democratic participation across all levels of government and they could have done more signposting or even facilitated an introduction. Government officials should be meeting their constituents where they are and not expect everyone to be able to follow strict and unrepresentative protocol.

Another concern raised by a few participants was how difficult it was to find, navigate and understand the information on local government websites. It would take them a long time to find the information they needed and even when they found partial answers they still didn't know what the best next steps were to take.

Education:

About a third of participants didn't know what an MP or Councillor is. Only about half of participants at the London location knew who their MP was and only one or two knew who their MP was in the Mansfield location.

Democratic and civic education could play a significant role in improving people's knowledge of the government, its responsibilities, and knowing how to most effect change. Starting with basic levels about our parliamentary process and the different roles of people who hold decision-making power could make a huge difference.

Additionally, participants found it difficult to differentiate between National and Local government, what each organisation's responsibilities are and who would be the most appropriate person or department to contact for further support or to raise their concern. The challenges of getting in contact with those that represent us goes beyond just navigating a complex system but is also likely due to the lack of access to civic and democratic education among the general population, especially those within SEND provision.

When asked, only one participant was able to mention a form of political engagement beyond voting. Democratic and civic education can go a long way toward increasing democratic participation, importantly, beyond voting.

Who we trust:

Most participants mentioned discussing politics and news with their parents, friends, and extended family. Participants often mentioned their support workers being someone they felt comfortable having important conversations with, including about voting and participation. However, time and time again in conversations with service managers and support workers they've mentioned that they feel like they need more

support to be able to hold this conversation free of biases and to encourage the person they support to think for themselves.

Most participants didn't have access to the internet nor social media. Which raises concerns about the number of people with learning disabilities that have been excluded from previous research from across the sector. This also highlights the need to explore other avenues to reach disabled communities, such as through their support workers, friends and family members.

One participant that uses YouTube to access the news said, **“people only speak about issues from their own point of view.”** More widely, participants mentioned that the news is usually presented in ways that are inaccessible and truly appreciate when organisations like MVMV publish important and relevant news in Easy Read formats. When prompted all participants said they would benefit from more regular Easy Read news publications and that we should encourage mainstream media sources like the BBC to do the same.

4. Defining co-design within the learning-disabled community

Participants were most concerned with accessibility and representativeness in the ways they could get involved in the future. Participants focused on making our work led by people with lived experience and were most interested in public facing activities like attending events and meetings with decision-makers.

Participants mentioned many ways they could be incentivised to take part in future involvement but were worried about how certain incentives would affect them as recipients of public benefits.

Accessibility:

Participants raised that when they are invited to further deliberative or participatory conversations that they would like the themes, questions, and informational material to be shared in Easy Read a week before the meeting is to take place. They also suggested that reading and preparing for the meeting should be listed as optional. Sharing it too far ahead in the future of the sessions could lead to information being lost or forgotten.

Participation in the project should be flexible and modular; Participants should be able to state that they no longer want to attend regular in person meetings but still be able to take part in other ways that still feel meaningful to them. This should be discussed with the individual and as much as possible keep them involved in ways that best suit their motivation and capabilities.

It will sometimes be necessary for participants to be accompanied by their support worker. Considerations should be taken to make sure the participant and support worker aren't out of pocket for expenses

Representation and ways people want to be involved in future work:

Participants stated that it was very important that **“campaigns should be in my own words.”** The only true way to accomplish this is for our work to be led by people with lived experience of learning disabilities.

People mentioned that they would appreciate having more deliberative and conversational sessions in smaller groups. They were also interested in getting involved in the governance of My Vote My Voice and in speaking about our campaign in interviews. They were excited by their ideas being shared in their own words on our website, social media, mainstream media, podcasts, and reports.

Participants were very excited about attending future advocacy events. They were particularly excited about attending meetings where they could meet with politicians and decision-makers face to face.

Participants were less excited about responding to questionnaires or polling, saying that they often found them boring and too difficult to do on their own. They also mentioned feeling uneasy having to speak to strangers on the street.

Reimbursement and incentivisation for taking part:

The two most common requests were payment for their time at the living wage or above. Participants were worried about how working would affect their public benefits.

Participants also wanted recognition for their contributions throughout reports, social media, mainstream media, on our website, and giving them a certificate of participation. Other participants said that what they were most interested in was learning and receiving training to become self-advocates.

Most importantly, people wanted to be kept informed as the campaign continued to develop over time. Participants said this was the most common way they felt they had been let down in the past.

LESSONS LEARNED ALONG THE WAY:

Participants were really interested in digging into politics-adjacent topics beyond the scope of this initial research. It seems promising that with education and continued accessible engagement it will be possible to increase democratic participation within local government.

A project like this needs to exceed the reasonable accommodations often offered during other deliberative and qualitative research. This will require extra resources like:

- Payment for the time of participants and their support workers
- Communication professionals specialised in BSL, Makaton, Easy Read, and learning disabilities
- Extra time for design and delivery, as well as inviting participants and their support workers for sense making exercises.

What topics were participants interested in:

During the focus groups, we found that participants were interested in many politics and democracy adjacent topics. Interestingly, it seemed that the recurring topics are those that are mostly under the responsibility of local authorities. Topics they raised under at least partial responsibility of local government include:

- Health and social care
- Housing
- Education
- Policing
- Public transport (and evaluating how accessible it is)
- Employment support schemes for people with disabilities
- Provision and maintenance of community spaces, including those that allow us to stay healthy.

Areas mentioned that would likely fall under the responsibility and privy of national government.

- National social care staff training framework and regulation
- IDs and working cards
- Disability rights
- Inclusion and representation
- Animal rights

By hosting deliberative conversations that focus on the topics that most interest our audiences, we believe we can achieve a higher engagement rate, and continue to explore how we can increase democratic participation as well as deepening our

understanding of the views of people with learning disabilities and autism on specific topics which affect them.

Operations, logistics, design and delivery:

During these sessions we came across some challenges which we should learn from and be more prepared for future engagement. Please see the table below:

Challenge	Recommendation
It can be hard to get a clear idea of how many participants are going to show up on the day, if start and end times will be respected, and last-minute changes are common.	Be prepared to break into smaller groups, have flexible start and finish times, and make sure the event host has organised catering (i.e. lunch, tea/biscuits, snacks, etc.)
During all sessions, hosts were asked if there were barriers to participation that we needed to prepare for. On all occasions they said “no”.	We should assume there are going to be barriers to participation. Arrive prepared with visual and other prompts including Easy Read.
Some participants with more profound learning disabilities may be uncomfortable and unable to participate meaningfully in a group environment.	Offer 1:1 interview(s) with people with more profound learning disabilities to encourage them to participate in meaningful ways.
Support workers and service managers raised their concern for support workers in the current political climate. Service managers requested that more wellbeing support be provided to support workers to talk about their current experiences, challenges, and helping them navigate this complicated time.	We should build in engagement with support workers to our projects more formally. It would be great to include them in sessions as well as hosting a separate space for them.
We should increase the number of participants and include groups for support workers.	Lining up the deliberative conversation with other activities that local community hubs are hosting is likely to increase number of participants and diversify involvement to include participants that have both have and don't have experience with democratic participation.

We believe that honesty and transparency is important to foster a collaborative and shared value driven sector. For this reason, we share how we can improve our research efforts moving forward so that other parties in the sector may also benefit from our learnings and we can collectively better work alongside the communities we serve. We encourage others to do the same.

CONCLUSION:

It is often forgotten how many of the ubiquitous conveniences we have today were first developed as a reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities. For example, keyboard/typewrites, audiobooks, escalators, curb cuts, electric toothbrushes, Velcro, automatic doors, and many more. We should invest time to thinking more about how accessibility for the few can benefit the many. With 2 million people with learning disabilities in the UK and approximately 20% of people identifying as disabled, we are not referring to an isolated minority but instead to a large proportion of our democracy.

For this reason, we share the following recommendations to increase democratic participation in local government among residents with learning disabilities and autism:

Recommendation	Urgency	Impact
Manifestos, voter registration forms, ballot paper and other campaign materials, government websites, and mainstream media should be made available in accessible formats including Easy Read, Braille, and text to speech software.	Very high	Very impactful
SEND democratic and civic education is urgently needed. We need to prevent losing an entire generation of political participation due to lack of access to education about our civic rights, privileges, and responsibilities. Emphasis should be placed in explaining the differences between national and local government responsibilities.	Very high	Very impactful
Increasing and improving accessible communication published by politicians and political parties. Including face to face meetings with people with learning disabilities.	High	High impact
Improving access to work, including short term employment without negatively affecting recipients of public benefits.	Medium	High impact
Projects should make every effort to be led and delivered by people with lived experience.	Medium	High impact
Supporting disabled voters feel prepared to vote in-person. This includes visiting polling stations and working with polling clerks before voting day.	Medium	Medium impact
Expanding efforts to reach the disabled community without access to digital networks.	Medium	Medium impact

As a society we should invest and take time to prepare how we can make all aspects of our world accessible for all, for one day we will all be directly or indirectly affected by disability.

APPENDIX:

MVMV FOCUS GROUP: DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION AMONG PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

*The themes and questions in this discussion guide were developed by MVMV's Steering Group including Maxine Spry, Ali Gunn, Patti Garcia Gomez, Shiu-Ming Man, Ismail Kaji, Matthew Dix, Mark Brookes MBE, Hannah Molloy, Sarah Walters, and Amy Key
July - August 2025*

CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES:

Delivering focus groups with both individuals familiar without work and those newer to our campaign will help us understand how our resources and interventions are received by new audiences, allowing for a light-touch A/B test.

In-person focus will be both from urban and more rural locations, including:

- Individuals already engaged with MVMV – Richmond (London)
- One group with a new audience – Nottingham (existing services for United Response but with limited to no previous exposure to MVMV).

Key themes to be covered in the focus groups – and what outputs could be:

- Barriers and enablers to voting – video/written content of people with lived experience expressing the barriers and enablers in their own voice/words.
- Representation and feeling heard – exploration of examples of best practice, where politicians are connecting with disabled voters, where there are opportunities to improve, and areas for further exploration.
- Where people get their information and who they trust – insights on trusted sources (e.g., social media, newspapers, family, MVMV) to guide our campaign.
- What co-design means to them – understand appetite for active campaigning involvement and identify potential new steering group members and advocates.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION:

ITEM	Who?
Print discussion guides (at least 4 copies)	Moderator

Print extra consent forms (# of participants expected + 5)	Moderator
Set up room, make sure to make it easy to move chairs if participants arrive with their support workers, using mobility devices, for people to be able to be heard on the recording.	Moderator
Easy Read versions of the questions	Only if needed

DISCUSSION GUIDE:

Location:

Participants:

Section – Purpose	Questions & Content	Time
Consent and check in	As people arrive, please make sure that they have completed the consent form. If not, please ask them to complete it before they are able to join the session.	30-minutes before the session
Welcome and introductions – familiarise people with today's objectives, remind them about their right to leave the research at any point, and introduce the group to each other.	<p>Hello, my name is [X] and I'm [role] for My Vote My Voice. My Vote My Voice is a group of over 200 organisations from across the UK. We're working together to make voting and our democracy accessible to all, especially to people with disabilities.</p> <p>Today's conversation will be part of research we are doing to plan the next few years of our work.</p> <p>We're really looking forward to hearing what you've got to say. There are no right or wrong answers – we just want to understand your views and ideas. It's important we hear from everyone in the room, and that we don't take up more of your time than you signed up for, so I might need to interrupt you or move the conversation on at times.</p> <p>You can opt out of the research at any time without affecting the payment for showing up today. You just need to let me know.</p>	10-minutes

	<p>Lastly, before we get started. I would like to remind you that this conversation will be recorded. This is so we can listen back if we need to and make sure, we have all the information we need from this session.</p> <p>What you say here today won't be shared with anyone outside of our research team and will be deleted once the project has completed. We may get back in touch if we want to quote you directly on our website, social media, and our reports. Please note, that if you choose not to be quoted, we may still use the quote without sharing any identifiable information, this means that we would share the quote anonymously or without sharing your name.</p> <p>If you need to step out to use the loo or take a break, please feel free to do so at any time and rejoin us when you are ready. The group will be taking a break halfway through, or approximately in one hour. [State time] Is this okay for everyone?</p> <p>[START RECORDING]</p> <p>Do you have any questions before we get started?</p> <p>Firstly, thank you for being here today. We're going to start by asking everyone to briefly introduce themselves by sharing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your name • If you are interested in politics <p>[Go around the circle and write down people's names – or use name tags] - [make sure to take attendance as only those that attended will be paid for their time]</p> <p>Thank you for sharing. We are now going to move onto the first theme of today's conversation.</p>	
<p>Theme 1: Your experience of voting - people with lived experience expressing the</p>	<p>During this section we want to have a deep understanding of your experience of voting. Voting is when you choose the person or group you want to be in charge of decisions in your local area. It is a way of having your say. We want to understand</p>	<p>20-minutes</p>

<p>barriers and enablers in their own voice and words.</p>	<p>what makes it difficult, and what would make it easier for you to vote.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who here has voted before? [take note of rough numbers] • [for those that have voted] What was your experience of voting for the first time? or How do you feel after voting? (prompt if needed – exciting, scary, confusing, disappointing, happy, etc.) • [for those that haven't voted] What would get you excited or motivated to vote? • What does voting mean to you? (For example: choosing who makes rules, or having your say.) • What makes you want to vote? (Or, what would make you want to vote?) • Do you think that voting is important? Why or why not? • When you vote, do you get enough information? Is the information easy for you to understand? • Who supports you to vote? Your family? Support worker? <p>Would anyone like to add anything else before we move on to the next theme?</p>	
<p>Theme 2: Representation and feeling heard – Exploration of examples of best practice, where politicians are connecting with disabled voters, where there are opportunities to improve, and areas for further exploration</p>	<p>During this next section we will be discussing what you feel it means to be heard, and what representation looks like to you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you know who your MP is? Your MP or Member of Parliament speaks for your area in government. • Do you think they are doing a good job? Can you say how? • Have you met your MP? • If you have contacted your MP, did they respond? Did you find their response helpful, and easy to understand? • What would show you that you have been heard by your MP? What would it look like? Feel like? • Are there any disabled MPs or Local Councillors in your area? • Do you know of any disabled MPs, Local Councillors, or Politicians? 	<p>20-minutes</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you encourage others around you to vote? • Do you feel like political parties include you? What would they need to do in order to make you feel included? (prompt if needed: manifestos or campaign materials in Easy Read/other accessible formats like Braille or videos with BSL or Makaton) <p>Would anyone like to add anything further before we go on a break?</p>	
COMFORT BREAK	<p>We are now going to take a 10-minute break. Please use this time to go to the toilet and get a cup of tea, or simply feel free to take a break and relax. Please be back and ready to start by [TIME]</p> <p>[PAUSE RECORDING]</p> <p>Welcome back everyone. Before we get started again, I am going to hit record.</p> <p>[START RECORDING]</p> <p>Before we jump back in, does anyone have any questions?</p>	10-minutes
Theme 3: information systems and trust – Insights on trusted sources (e.g. social media, newspapers, family, MVMV) to guide our campaign	<p>We are now going to talk about how you stay up to date on politics and who you trust to share information about voting and politics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who do you talk to about politics? • Where do you get your information about voting and politics? [make note of count for each of the below]: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Family - o Friends - o Support worker or support provider - o Radio - o News - o Local newspaper - o National newspaper - o Podcasts - o Social media - o MVMV - 	25-minutes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Any others I haven't already mentioned? - • Have you used you local council's website? What do you think about it? • Have you visited a political party website? What do you think about it? • Has your support worker or support provider shared information with you about voting or politics? If so, what formats are they sharing this information in? What is included in this information? • What resources would help you decide how to vote? • Have you heard of the MVMV Campaign? <p>[Section below only for groups with familiarity with MVMV]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you feel that MVMV information is useful? • Do you feel that MVMV resources are trustworthy? • Do you think MVMV has helped you to understand voting? If so, was it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Website - o Emails - o Easy Read resources - • What formats are missing that you would find useful? (e.g. BSL on videos, Braille, Makaton, etc.) <p>Would anyone like to add anything else before we move onto our fourth and final theme of the day?</p>	
<p>Theme 4: What does co-design mean to you? -</p> <p>Understanding appetite for active campaign involvement, and identify potential new steering group members and advocates.</p>	<p>We will now start the final theme of today's session. We are going to discuss what being involved in our future work would mean to you and what would make it easier.</p> <p>During this project we will be using many of the principles of co-design. Co-design means working together to solve a challenge, with everyone's ideas being listened to and considered regardless of who said it or how much power they hold. It's about making something that works for everyone.</p>	25-minutes

	<p>We are planning the next steps of our work and we would like to include you as much as possible. So please be as honest as possible so that we may do our best to include you in ways that are meaningful and comfortable for you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What ways could we involve you in the campaign? (E.g. steering group member, spokesperson, paid contributor, etc.) • What would encourage you to be more involved in the making of the campaign? • What would make the campaign feel like it's <i>your</i> campaign? • Some people would find it easier to take part in our work if we were to share questions ahead of time. How far ahead of time do you need us to share questions and conversation topics? • Some people would find it easier to take part in our work if information during the session is presented in different formats. Which formats would you find most helpful? • How would you like to be recognised for your future contributions? What would make you feel appreciated? (e.g. payment/voucher, printable certificate, tagging on social media, mention in our report). <p>[For participant groups more familiar with co-design or with previous experience of interacting with MVMV]</p> <p>Many of you have worked with MVMV in the past, we want to know what this has been like for you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you like about working with MVMV in the past? • What do you feel could improve about working with MVMV? • Was there anything that was particularly difficult? • Was there anything that made you feel uneasy? • What made you feel comfortable? 	
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	<p>[For participant groups less familiar with co-design or without much experience of interacting with MVMV]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think working with MVMV would be like? • Do you have any concerns about working with MVMV? • Is there anything that we can do to make working with us easier? • What would make you feel like your contributions to our work would be meaningful? <p>Before we move on, would anyone like to add anything further?</p> <p>We will take everything discussed in this last section into consideration when designing our future work. However, due to limitations like budget and the size of our team we cannot promise that we will be able to make all of your suggestions and requests a reality. Thank you for your patience.</p>	
Closing and next steps	<p>Before we close for today, I would like to share a bit more about My Vote My Voice.</p> <p>All of My Vote My Voice's work is led by our Steering Group. This group is led by people with lived experience of learning disabilities, autism, and other disabilities. Members of this group are sometimes invited to speak on-behalf of the organisation at public events, in parliament, or on the news. This group meets at least once a month to make important decisions about the design and delivery of our work. We are currently looking to grow this group by a few members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you be interested in attending a Steering Group meeting? • Would you be interested in being a member of the Steering Group? • Would you be happy to be interviewed on the news or for our social media channels about voting, politics, and your experience of working with MVMV? 	10-minutes

	<p>You can always change your mind whether you do or don't express interest in the above now, and we will share future opportunities to get involved as they become available.</p> <p>We are now going to close the session. Thank you to everyone here for your time, your ideas, your experiences and your contributions. Today's conversation will help us shape our future work and how we work together to make voting and politics accessible.</p> <p>If you haven't already, please make sure to share [payment details] with us so that we may recognise the time and experiences you've shared with us today.</p> <p>Before I stop the recording, does anyone have any further questions or anything further they would like to say?</p> <p>[STOP RECORDING]</p> <p>Thanks again everyone. We have the room until [XX:XX], so please feel free to chat amongst yourselves. When you leave, please remember to take all your belongings.</p> <p>Please get in touch via email at info@myvotemyvoice.org.uk if you have any questions, if there is anything else you would like to add or if there is anything that I can do to be of help.</p> <p>Thanks again and have a great afternoon.</p> <p>[take final attendance]</p>	
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<p>Next steps – this is for staff use only</p>	<p>Please write down the names of anyone you feel would be a good fit for the Steering Group or further advocacy work:</p> <p>Please upload the recording of the focus group to this folder. Once Patti has confirmed that the recording was received, please permanently delete the recording from your phone/device.</p> <p>If you have any questions, please reach out to Patti on: patti.garciagomez@unitedresponse.org.uk</p> <p>In the unlikely case that any safeguarding concerns arise, please take detailed notes and share these immediately with United Response Safeguarding Lead Mike Brent. Mike.Brent@UnitedResponse.org.uk</p> <p>Please clean up the room and leave it tidy.</p>	
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