

B7

Motion

Proposer: Samuel Hall (Green Party)

Title: **The Right to Speak: Accessible UK-Based
Phone Contact for UK Consumers**

Motion text

The Young Greens Note:

- An increasing number of businesses operating in the UK are removing telephone contact options and forcing customers to rely solely on written communication channels such as chatbots, web forms, and email.
- Access to effective communication is a fundamental component of equality, accessibility, and consumer rights.

The Young Greens Believe:

- This practice is exclusionary and discriminatory, particularly towards disabled people, elderly customers, and those with additional communication needs, including people with dyslexia and visual impairments.
- All businesses operating in the UK and providing goods or services to UK consumers should provide a publicly available customer contact telephone number.
- This telephone number should be answered by staff physically based in the United Kingdom.
- Telephone contact must be available during clearly stated UK business hours.
- Reasonable exemptions or proportionate requirements may apply to micro-enterprises, sole traders, and charities where appropriate, without undermining accessibility.

The Young Greens Resolve:

- To call for and work with the Green Party of England and Wales to adopt this policy as part of its consumer protection and disability justice platform.
- To call for Green Party representatives to advocate for legislation guaranteeing accessible, human-centred customer communication.

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- To campaign publicly on the right of all UK consumers to speak to a human being when accessing services.

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Reason

Dyslexia affects approximately 1 in 10 people in the UK, making written communication slower, more stressful, or inaccessible without assistive tools. Text-only customer service systems disproportionately exclude disabled people, elderly customers, and those with additional communication needs.

Increasingly, businesses operating in the UK — particularly large technology and social media corporations — rely on offshore, automated, or written-only customer service systems. These practices are frequently used to reduce costs, weaken accountability, and limit meaningful engagement with customers and workers.

The UK economy is now heavily dependent on large technology and social media platforms to facilitate gig-based and precarious work. Many people rely on platforms such as YouTube, Meta-owned services, ride-hailing apps, and food delivery platforms as their primary or sole source of income.

There are numerous documented cases of workers and content creators having their accounts suspended or permanently removed through fully automated systems, often without clear explanation or human oversight. In these situations, individuals can instantly lose their livelihood, leaving them unable to pay rent or bills.

In such cases, affected individuals are frequently denied the ability to speak to a human being. Appeals processes are typically limited to automated forms and scripted responses, treating people as data points rather than as human beings with unique circumstances.

This process is deeply de-humanising and demoralising, and can have serious impacts on mental health, dignity, and financial security. Young Greens believe that in situations where a person's income or access to essential services is at stake, there must be a right to speak to another person — not merely to interact with an algorithm.

Requiring UK-based customer contact ensures that decisions affecting UK residents are handled by people who are subject to UK employment law, regulatory standards, and social context. UK-based staff are more likely to understand the lived realities of those affected and to exercise discretion, empathy, and accountability.

Mandating that large corporations provide UK-based telephone contact would also create significant employment opportunities within the UK. Given the scale of users on major social media and technology platforms, compliance would necessitate the hiring of thousands of UK-based customer service workers.

This policy would therefore both strengthen consumer and worker protections and actively support job creation, countering the widespread outsourcing of labour and the erosion of employment standards.

Young Greens affirm that accessibility, accountability, and human dignity must take precedence over corporate cost-cutting and automation. Speaking to a human being should be a basic right in an economy increasingly dominated by powerful, unaccountable platforms.

Supporters

Sam Hall (O&W Green Party), James Bayliss (O&W Green Party), Abigail Hailes (O&W Green Party), Amy Davis (O&W Green Party), Amarpreet Dhillon (O&W Green Party), Philippa Crommentuijn-Marsh (O&W Green Party), Adam Brace (O&W Green Party)