



Sir Chris Bryant MP
Minister of State for Data Protection &
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Department for Science, Innovation &
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To: Chi Onwurah MP

27 February 2025

Data (Use and Access) Bill: House of Commons Second Reading

Dear Chi Onwurah,

Thank you for participating in the Second Reading debate of the Data (Use and Access) Bill on the 12th February. During the debate, I promised to write to you on open standards, open source and data sharing.

This Government has been clear that it wants to maximise the societal benefits from public sector data assets. As my colleague Minister Vallance said in the House of Lords very recently, we need to ensure good data collection, high quality curation, interoperability and ways of valuing data that secure appropriate value returns to the public sector.

The Government recognises the importance of open standards. They are designed collaboratively; are publicly available, and free or low cost; and help avoid vendor lock-in to specific technologies or suppliers. They also improve software interoperability; and help the sharing of data between services and systems. The work of the Data Standards Authority, within GDS, to coordinate cross-government work on data standards, looks to adopt open standards wherever possible.

This is a very active policy area. We are now in an age where we need to start considering data and its underpinning infrastructure as a strategic national asset, and it was for this reason that we designated data centres as Critical National Infrastructure. The government agrees it is essential that we ensure legal and policy frameworks are fit for purpose for the modern demands and uses of data.

The National Data Library (NDL) represents an enormous opportunity for the United Kingdom to unlock the full value of our public data. Our approach to the National Data Library will be guided by the principles of public law and the requirements of the UK's data protection legislation, including the data protection principles and data subject rights. This will ensure that data sharing is fair, secure, and preserves privacy. It will also ensure that we have clear mechanisms for both valuation and value capture. We are seeking advice from experts on all of these issues.

The NDL is still in the early stages of development with key decisions still to be made. We will engage and consult with a broad range of stakeholders on the National Data Library in due course, including members of both Houses.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss the Data Bill further with you and any other colleagues. If you'd like to arrange a meeting, please do let my office know by emailing ps.bryant@dcms.gov.uk. A copy of this letter will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

I look forward to hearing from you and the Committee as I take this Bill through the House.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Bryant". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Chris Bryant MP
Minister of State