How would you characterise your views on the Bill in general?

In support

I support the bill as it would be an important step towards equality for LGBT people in Scotland. However I have some concerns should bill go through in the same way as the one in England and Wales.

How would you characterise your views on the introduction of same sex marriage, so that same sex couples can marry each other?

In support

I would be very pleased to see this made law. There should be no legal distinction between 'same sex marriages' and 'opposite sex marriages'.

How would you characterise your views on putting belief celebrants on the same footing as religious celebrants?

In support

How would you characterise your views on the arrangements for authorising celebrants to solemnise opposite sex and same sex marriage (including the opt-in procedures)?

Neither

I personally am not interested in having a religious marriage. Many people are however and I do not see why they should be denied this. I do not want to force any individual person to conduct a marriage of any couple. However, it makes me uncomfortable that we are enshrining in law that religious bodies will be allowed to refuse to conduct 'same sex' marriages where secular bodies are not allowed to do this. In my view religious bodies who wish to conduct a legally recognised ceremony such as marriage should be treated the same as any secular body. I agree with the following statement from the Equality Network: 'We think that a small amendment is needed to section 11(2) of the bill, in order to give those religious and belief bodies that want to, the option of using the gender-free form of the marriage ceremony, in section 11(2)(g), for mixed-sex couples who would prefer that form. This is particularly important for mixed-sex couples where one or both is transgender or intersex. Religious bodies that wish to always use the husband and wife gendered form of the marriage ceremony should be free to continue to do so.'

How would you characterise your views on civil partnerships changing to marriages?

Neither
People should be able to do this easily if they so wish. However I would prefer if civil partnerships still existed and were not automatically converted to marriages.

How would you characterise your views on allowing civil marriage ceremonies to take place anywhere, other than religious premises, agreed between the couple and registrar?

In support

How would you characterise your views on allowing the religious and belief registration of civil partnerships?

In opposition

I would prefer civil partnerships to remain secular.

How would you characterise your views on allowing transgender persons to stay married when obtaining a full Gender Recognition Certificate, which provides legal recognition in the acquired gender?

In support

I strongly support this. The current situation where a couple are forced to divorce in order for one partner to obtain a GRC is cruel and unnecessary. However I disagree with the 'spousal veto'. As the partner of a trans person and having supported numerous other partners, I do not feel that it is right or necessary that a spouse should have that control over the legal recognition of their partner's gender. Cisgendered (non-trans) partners' thoughts and feelings are often disregarded or minimised when it comes to transition. I believe much more support should be available. However this aspect of the bill will not resolve any of that. I agree with the Equality Network's suggestion: We therefore believe that spousal consent should not be required for the granting of gender recognition, but should instead be required for the subsequent re-registration of the marriage and the issue of a new marriage certificate. As at present, the non-trans spouse would continue to be able to obtain a divorce in such circumstances, if they wished to end the marriage.

Would you like to comment on the wider issue of protections for those in society who may have concerns about same sex marriage?

They should shut up and get on with their lives. They will not be required to be part of a same sex marriage. Their opinion is irrelevant.

Would you like to comment on the wider issue of freedom of speech?

Would you like to comment on any other wider issues in relation to the Bill that are not mentioned above?

Mixed-sex civil partnerships should be introduced. The system MUST be truly equal or what is the point of anything?

Are you responding as...
a private individual

Amanda Forde
14 August 2013