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

In opposition

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

In opposition

I am opposed to any discrimination or inequality in society against any individual, other than what occurs naturally by virtue of our biological differences. Since the beginning of Human existence, a man and a woman have through a natural sexual union, enjoyed the opportunity to produce children. Society has celebrated this sexual union in the act of Marriage, offering stability and structure for family, essential for any growing stable community. As I understand it, current legislation offers exactly the same legal rights and protections for Same Sex Civil Partnerships, as enjoyed by Married couples. The essential and important difference is Marriage is recognised as the human ideal for the producing and raising of children.

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

In opposition

Marriage has it's roots in Religious tradition, many celebrants have studied and trained very carefully to fulfil this role as part of the Human narrative. People are of course free to choose a non religious ceremony (civil marriage). Belief without tradi

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)?

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

In opposition

I am opposed to any discrimination or inequality in society against any individual, other that what occurs naturally by virtue of our biological differences. Since the beginning of Human existence, a man and a woman have through a natural sexual union, en

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
Marriage is a celebration and couples should be allowed the freedom to chose a mutually agreeable venue.

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

In opposition

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 opposition

Whilst such issues require great sensitivity and compassion, I believe common sense indicates that with the change of gender comes the change in the sexual union and is therefore no longer marriage capable of procreation.

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

Scotland has a rich heritage of traditional beliefs and values, many people right across this nation hold these values and beliefs. I believe from Registrars to Teachers, if they experience a conflict in the exercising of their profession due to their beliefs or religious position, their should be an opt on the grounds of conscience. To penalise them would be unfair and cause unnecessary strife and anguish, resulting in potentially excellent people being barred from certain lines of employment on the grounds of their traditional religious beliefs etc. There should be an opt out without fear or favour clause.

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

Sadly some of the language surrounding this proposed bill on same sex marriage, has become very polarised and intolerant. Clearly the Bill's main objective is to ensure a more just society, where hatred and discrimination are positively addressed. Many people hold a traditional understanding of marriage (one man, one woman), but would be deeply offended as being described as being discriminatory, or Homophobic. People should always be free to discuss and debate political policy/proposed legislation without fear from opposing positions, or the state.

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

Are you responding as...

 a celebrant

Rev Andrew Fothergill
20 August 2013