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

In support

Supportive in general, but not also allowing opposite sex couples to have a civil partnership appears to be an oversight.

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

In support

To not be in support would be to instead support the continuing discrimination against the LGBT community.

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

In support

To not be in support would be to instead support the state continuing to favour some faiths and belief structures over others.

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)?

I don't know what this means. Plain English should be applied here unless you are only looking for evidence from people from academic or legal backgrounds.

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

Frankly, it is not clear what this question is asking.

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 opposition

They should also be allowed in religious premises if approval is granted by the relevant religious institution and local clergy.

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

In support
To not support this would be to continue to support discrimination of those in the LGBT community, many of whom may wish for a religious or spiritual element to their acknowledging their union, whether this involves marriage per se.

**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

To not support this would be to continue to support discrimination against transgender people.

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

Religious institutions and individual clergy should be allowed to opt out of performing ceremonies. This choice should remain with those churches. They should not be legally obliged, not legally forbidden, from performing said ceremonies.

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

The relevant issue is not that of freedom of speech but of freedom of religion. While steps should be made to end discrimination against the LGBT community being sanctioned by the state, it is important that freedom of religion is protected. These are both human rights issues. Churches, meaning both institutions and individual clergy, should therefore have the choice to conduct same gender marriage ceremonies or not, and the general public will decide whether or not said churches should have their support. The state should not attempt to legislate on behalf of any churches. However, churches should be held to account to the same degree as private individuals in terms of human rights, hate crimes, etc.

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

While I admire the Scottish Parliament's focus of consultation on this matter, particularly in comparison to the Westminster parliament rushing through legislation that has had adequate consultation attached, it seems that this consultation and the number of individual steps involved have been excessive and have caused unnecessary delay to this legislation being implemented. Until it is implemented, we in Scotland continue to discriminate in a way that other countries are no longer doing.

**Are you responding as...**

a private individual

Jimmy Gordon
23 August 2013