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

In support

I strongly support the Bill; it is unfortunate for us that England and Wales got there first!

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 think it is very important that same sex marriage and mixed sex marriage both be called "marriage"; any distinct phraseology for same sex marriage is continuing the discrimination of "civil partnership" for same sex couples as opposed to "marriage" for mixed sex couples.

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

In support

I am religious myself, but fully support non-religious celebrants being able to officiate at marriages

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)?

In support

I am a Quaker, and Quakers have discerned that God is calling us to marry both mixed sex and same sex couples. It is a matter of religious freedom that we be able to do this; at the same time the religious freedom of communities who do not agree with same sex marriage should be respected. It is important that gender-free language be available in the marriage service, if that is what the couple being married, and their religious community, want.

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

In support

I think it is important that civil partnerships registered outwith Scotland should be treated in the same way as those registered in Scotland. (I'm not in a civil
partnership myself, but had I been in one in England, and then moved to Scotland, I would have hoped it could have been converted into a marriage in just the same way as if the partnership had been registered in Scotland.)

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

This is of course an issue for all people, not just LGBT ones. But I would support the change.

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

In support

I think the broadest range of options should be available for all people who wish to register their relationships in whatever form. After all, every relationship is different!

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

It seems to be quite wrong to insist that transgender people have to divorce before their acquired gender can be recognised. I am not in favour of spousal consent being required for gender recognition; what if the relationship between the two spouses has broken down? Spousal consent should of course be required (instead) for re-registration of the marriage. I would also support equalising the minimum age of gender recognition to be the same as that of marriage (16).

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

The arrangements in the Bill strike me as sensible. Registrars and teachers should not be able to opt out of its requirements; for example, registrars already re-marry people who have been divorced, even if it is against their religious convictions.

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

I think the Bill's approach is right; I don't agree with those who disagree with same sex marriage, but they have an absolute right to express their opinion in public.

Would you like to comment on any other wider issues in relation to the Bill that are not mentioned above?
I think that mixed sex couples should be able to register as civil partners (rather than marry) if that is what they wish.

Are you responding as...

a private individual

Mark Manning
14 August 2013