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

In support

I strongly support and welcome the Bill. It will bring Scotland into line with the new marriage equality provisions in England & 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 strongly support and welcome this, as long as it means that same-sex couples can marry on the same basis as different-sex couples.

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

In support

I strongly support and welcome this.

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

Opt-in procedures seem the right way to balance equality and religious freedom.

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

In support

It should be a choice whether to 'upgrade' to marriage or remain as civil partners - and it should be as simple as possible to do the former. Some thought needs to be give as to how couples who are civilly partnered elsewhere will be enabled to marry 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

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

This would maximise freedom of choice.

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 and welcome this. However, a married trans person should not have to get the consent of their spouse to obtain gender recognition. And the age for applying for gender recognition should be in line with the age for marrying.

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

I think the Bill strikes a good balance between equality and religious freedom. Civil officials (e.g. registrars, local government officials, NHS personnel) should not be able to opt out. Teachers should not be able to opt out of talking about same-sex marriage on the grounds of personal opposition - they should be required to give factual answers about its availability/legality.

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

The Bill contains appropriate protections for freedom of religion. Disagreeing publicly with same-sex marriage is fine - as long as it does not constitute 'hate speech', or incite action against gay people in any way.

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

I would like to see FULL equality in relationship recognition: ie civil partnerships for different-sex couples as well as marriage for same-sex couples. I therefore welcome the Scottish government's commitment to review CP law (paralleling that of the English government). I would also like to see the Scottish government review issues surrounding the definition of adultery, and around inequities in pension provision.

Are you responding as...

an academic
a private individual

Sue Wilkinson
23 August 2013