

Response to the consultation on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill

Appendix 3 - Full text of responses to the consultation

Set out in the following tables are the full responses to the consultation on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill. The first table sets out the responses that appear to be wholly or broadly opposed to the principle of this legislation; the second table sets out the responses that appear to be wholly or broadly supportive of this legislation; the third table covers responses that do not properly fall into either of these categories.

A total of 176 responses were received and accepted¹. 76 responses were opposed; 90 responses were supportive; and there were 10 other responses. In the case of both those opposed to the proposed legislation and those who were supportive of it, the majority of the responses were from individuals rather than organisations.

For reference the four questions in the consultation were:

Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?

Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?

Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?

Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?

The Consultation Document is still available at: <https://www.gov.im/ConsultationDetail.gov?id=536>

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Supportive responses	72
Other responses	103

¹ This total includes two separate responses from one person, one of concerned the consultation process and the other on the principle of the proposed legislation.

It does not include a small number of responses which were discarded for being submitted anonymously (e.g. very concerned Resident or with an unreadable signature and no contact details). It also does not include a response that was not received until January 2016. The content of these responses is not included in this document.

Opposed responses

Respondent	Comments
Rob & Sue Harrison	Under no circumstances should this be allowed, Man-woman, Woman-Man, that is marriage!!!.
Harry Howell	<p>Why does the government seek to make the Island, just another fragment of the outside agencies which are making such a mess of their responsibilities throughout the world.</p> <p>If as continually perpetuated, we are independent.....open our eyes to the sick outside world and do not follow like sheep.</p> <p>This draught legislation would be another conformity to pressure from what large numbers consider to be immoral.</p> <p>Time Common Sense and diligence revisited our unique rock on planet, and politicians considered others besides themselves.</p>
George and Kerry Heuer	<p><i>From: http://www.tynwald.org.im/about/Pages/default.aspx</i></p> <p><i>Tynwald claims to be the oldest continuous parliamentary assembly in the world, with a tradition of over 1,000 years of meetings being held. As an assembly first in Celtic and later Viking guises, the main business was not legislative i.e. passing laws. It was the means by which the ruler controlled the community, ensured continuity by nominating successors, and resolved disputes.</i></p> <p>Isle of Man is a testament to grit and hard work, a tough land full of Celtic and Viking history. Out of sheer respect for the fore fathers of this Isle; I would have thought that this "Bill" would not have been entertained.</p> <p>A foreword by the Chief Minister stating that he wants I.O.M to be a "modern & inclusive" nation is the exact opposite of what makes this <i>gutsy</i> island special. Isle of Man is known for its modern day Vikings every year when the TT gets underway, the Manx GP, the Southern 100 etc. I can assure you that should I.O.M become a "gay haven", your real men will cease to spend their money here each year.</p> <p>Aside from the incredible damage to the reputation of the island, the current medical services (where a 3 hour wait at Nobles A&E is not unusual) would not be able to handle the toll that the increase in syphilis, gonorrhoea, Hepatitis B, the "gay bowel syndrome" (which attacks the intestinal tract), tuberculosis and cytomegalovirus would have. (http://www.traditioninaction.org/HotTopics/a02rStatistcs.html)</p> <p>One would also need to take into account that more psychological counsellors and police would need to be employed to deal with the increase in deviant behaviour (with its life-long consequences) meted out by the homosexual community:</p> <p>Homosexuals are overrepresented in child sex offenses: Individuals from the 1 to 3 percent of the population that is sexually attracted to the same sex are committing up to one-third of the sex crimes against children. (REF: http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=is02e3)</p> <p>As the decisions made today affect the generations of tomorrow for the Isle of Man, I stand contrary to the passing of this Bill in order to protect the natural roles of the men and women of the future, in the Isle of Man. I stand contrary to this Bill especially to protect our little boys & girls and young men & women from sexual predators – which statistics prove, the majority come from this group in society.</p> <p>I notably stand contrary to this Bill as the homosexual acts are contrary to all natural order & are an absolute abomination as stated in Scriptures repeatedly.</p> <p>Judging matters rightly is not according to the majority but according to what is right and good. The instant destruction of land in Scripture is recorded due to two great moral failings: when judges fail to judge righteously & take bribes and when homosexuals are allowed to flourish.</p> <p>There are currently between 79-81 countries (stats vary) wherein homosexuality is considered illegal and is punishable. Rather let us align with them, upholding the masculine & feminine roles proudly - an Isle of Man we can cherish as a safe future home for our generations to come.</p> <p>In response to (5) Consultation Questions of Pg 12</p> <p>Q1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>Marriage is a Scriptural institution representing matters that ascend earthly realms. Any "sexual act" between two people of the same sex is abominable & any long term <i>understanding</i> between those persons cannot utilize Scriptural terminology – it can never be called marriage.</p> <p>Q2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the U.K?</p> <p>As the Isle of Man has prided itself on its own and separate Tynwald Parliament, separate monetary units, own tax structure, unique language & culture, why on earth would I.O.M now want to align itself with the U.K on this matter? Equal weights and measures need to be applied.</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Q3: Do you have any comments on the draft SSC Bill that is provided in this document? It should not be entertained but rather outlawed – it is questionable that such a few should throw their weight around and change respectable laws bearing in mind that antibiotic resistant strains flourish in those “circles” & would demand great expense to treat. This would further burden tax payers who already shoulder public servant salaries? Rather outlaw homosexuality, save on medical fees & give the rubbish collection staff a raise who are the backbone that keep this island pristine!</p> <p>Q4: Do you have any other relevant comments? <u>Deu 29:23</u> And that the whole^{H3605} land^{H776} thereof is brimstone,^{H1614} and salt,^{H4417} and burning,^{H8316} that it is not^{H3808} sown,^{H2232} nor^{H3808} beareth,^{H6779} nor^{H3808} any^{H3605} grass^{H6212} groweth^{H5927} therein, like the overthrow^{H4114} of Sodom,^{H5467} and Gomorrah,^{H6017} Admah,^{H126} and Zeboim,^{H6636} which^{H834} YHWH overthrew^{H2015} in his anger,^{H639} and in his wrath:^{H2534} <u>Lev 18:22</u> Thou shalt not^{H3808} lie^{H7901} with^{H854} mankind,^{H2145} as with^{H4904} womankind:^{H802} it^{H1931} is abomination.^{H8441} <u>Lev 20:13</u> If^{H834} a man^{H376} also lie^{H7901} with^{H854} mankind,^{H2145} as he lieth^{H4904} with a woman,^{H802} both^{H8147} of them have committed^{H6213} an abomination:^{H8441} they shall surely be put to death;^{H4191} their blood^{H4191} shall be upon them.</p> <p>There remains a consequence for ones choices – let fearless lawmakers make the right & wise decision for our immediate and foreseeable future. It would be cowardly to give in to “politically correct” pressure and foolish to throw away the hard work of those who have gone before. Kind regards George & Kerry Heuer</p> <p>The statistics on homosexuality and its effects http://www.traditioninaction.org/HotTopics/a02rStatistcs.html Some statistics about the homosexual lifestyle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One study reports 70% of homosexuals admitting to having sex only one time with over 50% of their partners (3). • One study reports that the average homosexual has between 20 and 106 partners per year (6). The average heterosexual has 8 partners in a lifetime. • Many homosexual sexual encounters occur while drunk, high on drugs, or in an orgy setting (7). • Many homosexuals don't pay heed to warnings of their lifestyles: "Knowledge of health guidelines was quite high, but this knowledge had no relation to sexual behavior" (16). • Homosexuals got homosexuality removed from the list of mental illnesses in the early 70s by storming the annual American Psychiatric Association (APA) conference on successive years. "Guerrilla theater tactics and more straight-forward shouting matches characterized their presence" (2). Since homosexuality has been removed from the APA list of mental illnesses, so has pedophilia (except when the adult feels "subjective distress") (27). • Homosexuals account for 3-4% of all gonorrhea cases, 60% of all syphilis cases, and 17% of all hospital admissions (other than for STDs) in the United States (5). They make up only 1-2% of the population. • Homosexuals live unhealthy lifestyles, and have historically accounted for the bulk of syphilis, gonorrhea, Hepatitis B, the "gay bowel syndrome" (which attacks the intestinal tract), tuberculosis and cytomegalovirus (27). • 73% of psychiatrists say homosexuals are less happy than the average person, and of those psychiatrists, 70% say that the unhappiness is NOT due to social stigmatization (13). • 25-33% of homosexuals and lesbians are alcoholics (11). • Of homosexuals questioned in one study reports that 43% admit to 500 or more partners in a lifetime, 28% admit to 1000 or more in a lifetime, and of these people, 79% say that half of those partners are total strangers, and 70% of those sexual contacts are one night stands (or, as one homosexual admits in the film "The Castro", one minute stands) (3). Also, it is a favorite past-time of many homosexuals to go to "cruisy areas" and have anonymous sex. • 78% of homosexuals are affected by STDs (20). • Judge John Martaug, chief magistrate of the New York City Criminal Court has said, "Homosexuals account for half the murders in large cities" (10).

Respondent	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captain William Riddle of the Los Angeles Police says, "30,000 sexually abused children in Los Angeles were victims of homosexuals" (10). • 50% of suicides can be attributed to homosexuals (10). • Dr. Daniel Capron, a practicing psychiatrist, says, "Homosexuality by definition is not healthy and wholesome. The homosexual person, at best, will be unhappier and more unfulfilled than the sexually normal person" (10). For other psychiatrists who believe that homosexuality is wrong, please see National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality. • It takes approximately \$300,000 to take care of each AIDS victim, so thanks to the promiscuous lifestyle of homosexuals, medical insurance rates have been skyrocketing for all of us(10). • Homosexuals were responsible for spreading AIDS in the United States, and then raised up violent groups like Act Up and Ground Zero to complain about it. Even today, homosexuals account for well over 50% of the AIDS cases in the United States, which is quite a large number considering that they account for only 1-2% of the population. • Homosexuals account for a disproportionate number of hepatitis cases: 70-80% in San Francisco, 29% in Denver, 66% in New York City, 56% in Toronto, 42% in Montreal, and 26% in Melbourne (8). • 37% of homosexuals engage in sadomasochism, which accounts for many accidental deaths. In San Francisco, classes were held to teach homosexuals how to not kill their partners during sadomasochism (8). • 41% of homosexuals say they have had sex with strangers in public restrooms, 60% say they have had sex with strangers in bathhouses, and 64% of these encounters have involved the use of illegal drugs (8). • Depending on the city, 39-59% of homosexuals are infected with intestinal parasites like worms, flukes and amoebae, which is common in filthy third world countries (8). • The median age of death of homosexuals is 42 (only 9% live past age 65). This drops to 39 if the cause of death is AIDS. The median age of death of a married heterosexual man is 75 (8). • The median age of death of lesbians is 45 (only 24% live past age 65). The median age of death of a married heterosexual woman is 79 (8). • Homosexuals are 100 times more likely to be murdered (usually by another homosexual) than the average person, 25 times more likely to commit suicide, and 19 times more likely to die in a traffic accident (8). • 21% of lesbians die of murder, suicide or traffic accident, which is at a rate of 534 times higher than the number of white heterosexual females aged 25-44 who die of these things(8). • 50% of the calls to a hotline to report "queer bashing" involved domestic violence (i.e., homosexuals beating up other homosexuals) (18). • About 50% of the women on death row are lesbians (12). Homosexuals prey on children. • 33% of homosexuals ADMIT to minor/adult sex (7). • There is a notable homosexual group, consisting of thousands of members, known as the North American Man and Boy Love Association (NAMBLA). This is a child molesting homosexual group whose cry is "SEX BEFORE 8 BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE." This group can be seen marching in most major homosexual parades across the United States. • Homosexuals commit more than 33% of all reported child molestations in the United States, which, assuming homosexuals make up 2% of the population, means that 1 in 20 homosexuals is a child molestor, while 1 in 490 heterosexuals is a child molestor (19).



Close-up of one of the New York "Gay Parades"

Respondent	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73% of all homosexuals have had sex with boys under 19 years of age (9). • Many homosexuals admit that they are pedophiles: "The love between men and boys is at the foundation of homosexuality" (22). • Because homosexuals can't reproduce naturally, they resort to recruiting children. Homosexuals can be heard chanting "TEN PERCENT IS NOT ENOUGH, RECRUIT, RECRUIT, RECRUIT" in their homosexual parades. A group called the "Lesbian Avengers" prides itself on trying to recruit young girls. They print "WE RECRUIT" on their literature. Some other homosexuals aren't as overt about this, but rather try to infiltrate society and get into positions where they will have access to the malleable minds of young children (e.g., the clergy, teachers, Boy Scout leaders, etc.) (8). See the DC Lesbian Avengers web page, and DC Lesbian Avengers Press Release, where they threaten to recruit little boys and girls. Also, see AFA Action Alert.
Mr A Small	I am appalled at the manner in which this contentious bill is being rushed through. It is not necessary and is contrary to Christian Values. If Isle of Man gay couples wished to get married suggest they go somewhere where they can and keep it off the Island.
J Keith Sutton	<p>Regarding the consultation questions, I submit below my responses; my views are purely personal.</p> <p>Q1. Disagree</p> <p>Q2. This should not arise. The suggestion of once again copying the United Kingdom legislation merely illustrates just how ill equipped the Island is in such weighty matters with extensive dependence upon the UK, despite what Isle of Man Government members often try to pretend. No locally instigated legislation = no local law!</p> <p>Q3. No</p> <p>Q4. I have accepted civil partnerships for same sex couples. However, I cannot accept the move to 'marriage', for several reasons, each of which is available on request.</p>
J B Phillips	I wish to register my objection to the proposal to extend the right to marry ion Christain churches to same sex couples, as this proposal flies in the face of the Christain principles which have goverened matrimony for over 2000 years. It is an unwarranted attempt to alter faith by law, something which cannot be done or justified by reference to nearby jurisdictions.
Sheila Sutton	I think the wording of the document makes it very difficult for the ordinary lay man to engage in. The wording is necessary in part but confusing. I agree with civil partnerships but do not agree with same sex marriage. It must be difficult for people who have no emotional leaning to the opposite gender, but I cannot endorse a marriage ceremony between a couple of the same gender.
Name withheld as requested (Opposed - 1)	<p><i>Question 1:</i> <i>Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</i></p> <p>I should first like to state that I am a gay male and I do not feel in any way discriminated against by the current arrangements in this matter. It is my belief that the argument in favour of same sex marriage is well-intentioned but based on an erroneous concept of equality. As a man, I am not equal to a woman since I cannot give birth. There is, however, a complementarity. A male and female couple have the possibility of giving birth as a product of their union but a same sex couple do not. So why do we need to call both unions the same thing when they are not the same? It is preferable to celebrate the diversity and, indeed, complementarity of both types of union. If marriage bestows any rights which are not bestowed by a civil partnership, then this should be addressed but this is the only equality question which needs to be addressed in the matter. In short, then, my answer is that I disagree and I do not want this legislation introduced in my name.</p> <p><i>Question 2:</i> <i>If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</i></p> <p>If one subscribes to the equality argument, which I clearly do not, a glaring inequality in UK legislation is that heterosexual couples are not allowed to form a civil partnership. If same sex couples are to be allowed to marry on the Island then heterosexual couples must be allowed to form a civil partnership.</p> <p><i>Question 3:</i> <i>Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</i></p> <p>No comments as I do not wish to have it enacted!</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p><i>Question 4:</i> <i>Do you have any other relevant comments?</i></p> <p>It saddens me that those who oppose same sex marriage on religious grounds are often pilloried as “medieval”, “out of touch” or worse. Whereas there are of course bigots, it is my experience that many of these religious people are good people who do a lot of good and have no opposition to civil partnerships. It seems, though, that only minorities which are de rigueur are afforded attention.</p>
Mr & Mrs M Justice	<p>The Cabinet Office is seeking comments on the proposal to allow same sex couples to get married in the Isle of Man and on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill. My wife and I are totally opposed to Bill. Marriage is not just any relationship between human beings. It is a relationship rooted in human nature and thus governed by natural law. Natural law’s most elementary precept is that “good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided.” By his natural reason, man can perceive what is morally good or bad for him. Thus, he can know the end or purpose of each of his acts and how it is morally wrong to transform the means that help him accomplish an act into the act’s purpose. Any situation which institutionalizes the circumvention of the purpose of the sexual act violates natural law and the objective norm of morality. Being rooted in human nature, natural law is universal and immutable. It applies to the entire human race, equally. It commands and forbids consistently, everywhere and always. Saint Paul taught in the Epistle to the Romans that the natural law is inscribed on the heart of every man. (Rom. 2:14-15) Further, it is in the child’s best interests that he/she be raised under the influence of his natural father and mother. This rule is confirmed by the evident difficulties faced by the many children who are orphans or are raised by a single parent, a relative, or a foster parent. The unfortunate situation of these children will be the norm for all children of a same-sex “marriage.” A child of a same-sex “marriage” will always be deprived of either his natural mother or father. He will necessarily be raised by one party who has no blood relationship with him. He will always be deprived of either a mother or a father role model. Can you just imagine the damage that could be done to a child walking into a bedroom of his/her married parents (both men) and seeing them participating in anal sex!!! I could go on. The very thought of passing this Bill on the Isle of Man goes against and totally violates morality. Please pass this email on to the people considering the approval of this Bill</p>
J. Leslie Kaighin.	<p>What is marriage? The committed union of one man and one woman, the two becoming one flesh. The Lord Jesus Christ said male and female created he them. This has been the consistent understanding of marriage until very recently. Now we are faced with those who want what they claim is equality by redefining the meaning of something which is more than a word. Once you do this where is the limit on your changes? Where is the moral authority to provide any definition or restriction? If marriage is no longer to be as God has provided it then perhaps it will end up being something along the lines of "the mutually committed relationship of persons," for what right will you have to restrict it to any particular number of people? What if three, four or more people want to be married? The whole matter is shown up by the fact that in the proposals it is admitted that there can be no same sex adultery.</p>
Mr. D. and Mrs. C. Neades	<p>Our response We oppose the introduction of so-called same-sex marriage to the Isle of Man on the following grounds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the proposed legislation fundamentally misconstrues the purpose of the state’s legal recognition of marriage; 2. the proposed Bill is unnecessary and divisive; 3. on the basis of its own standards, the proposed legislation is intellectually incoherent and unfair; 4. the proposed Bill would enshrine homosexual marriage in law as a second-class institution; 5. the existing marriage legislation is already entirely fair and equal; 6. the proposed legislation would further undermine the institution of marriage to the detriment of society; 7. the proposed legislation does not sufficiently protect those who hold sincere philosophical or religious beliefs in opposition to same-sex ‘marriage’; 8. Tynwald has no public mandate to enact the proposed Bill;

Respondent	Comments
	<p>9. the proposed legislation is a rebellion against God’s moral Law, blasphemes the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is thus greatly offensive to Almighty God and to many people of faith.</p> <p>We shall now briefly explain each of these points.</p> <p>1. The proposed legislation fundamentally misconstrues the purpose of the state’s legal recognition of marriage</p> <p>Legislation should serve the good of society.</p> <p>The state has historically recognized and privileged particular institutions through its legal and tax systems. It does so because it believes this to result in tangible societal benefit. Traditional marriage (i.e. the lifelong union of one man and one woman) has long been recognized and privileged because society benefits economically and socially when children are raised in stable families where both father and mother are present throughout the child’s upbringing. Whilst it is true that traditional heterosexual marriages do not <i>necessarily</i> entail procreation, the state’s compelling interest in privileging traditional marriage is nevertheless to foster stable family environments where each child benefits from the distinct and complementary kinds of loving care offered by both father and mother. It is incontrovertible that the collapse of the traditional family in recent decades – caused in significant part by ill-advised legislative, tax and benefit policies – has resulted in great harm to our society.</p> <p>It is evident that same-sex unions do not naturally result in children, and that such unions unavoidably deprive any children of the right and benefit of being cared for by both biological parents. Furthermore, recent high-quality research shows that children under the care of same-sex couples are significantly disadvantaged relative to those in the care of heterosexual couples.^{1,2} The state can therefore have no compelling interest in privileging same-sex relationships through its legal or tax system. When considered in this light, the <i>Civil Partnership Act 2011</i> was undoubtedly misconceived.</p> <p>If legislation should serve the good of society, the state conversely has no reason to legislate in areas that do not accrue benefit to society. Indeed, it <i>should not</i> legislate in such areas. This is because even clearly beneficial laws necessarily infringe upon the freedom and liberties of others. (For example, even a highly desirable law against theft constrains the liberty of the would-be thief to act according to his avarice.) Since individual liberty is of great value, the state – absent a compelling societal benefit – should not attempt to legislate to validate one person’s mere opinion over that of another. It is notably <i>not</i> the task of the state to create law in an attempt to make people <i>feel</i> happy, affirmed, or comfortable with their life choices.</p> <p>The Consultation Document fails to present any societal benefit from the proposed legislation. It shows no understanding at all of why the state has historically privileged traditional marriage. Indeed, rather than advance a rational argument in support of the Bill, the Chief Minister instead makes in his foreword an ill-conceived emotional appeal to a vague notion of ‘fairness and tolerance’. We shall address this below.</p> <p>The only other basis put forward by the Consultation Document in favour of the proposed legislation is that other jurisdictions have also recently considered the matter. Yet, no matter how many times and in how many different ways this same point is repetitiously advanced by the Document, this bare observation fails to rise to the level of rational argument. Other jurisdictions introduce all sorts of legislation for all sorts of reasons, and yet we do not and should not automatically follow suit unless there is a compelling reason for so doing. Again, the Consultation Document conspicuously fails to enunciate such a reason. We observe too that the Document singularly avoids dealing with the rather obvious counter to its notion that jurisdictional precedent is somehow important – namely, the fact that vastly more jurisdictions presently prohibit so-called homosexual marriage than permit it. No legislation should ever be introduced upon such a paucity of rational argument as that evidenced by the Consultation Document. Far from this proposed Bill, in the words of the Chief Minister, sending ‘a strong message to the world that the Island is a modern and inclusive nation’, it instead proclaims loudly that the Island has abandoned rationality as a basis for its law, and has instead embraced the anarchy of unthinking emotionalism. Such elevation of feeling over rational thought is unworthy of our legislators, and bodes ill for our Island’s future. Indeed, the proposed Bill embodies exactly the kind of empty, gesture politics that a mature and responsible legislature should eschew.</p> <p>2. The proposed Bill is unnecessary and divisive</p> <p>Even if we were to concede some societal benefit to recognizing and privileging same-sex relationships, which we do not, the proposed legislation is utterly unnecessary. The <i>Civil Partnership Act 2011</i> already enables homosexual couples to form a civil partnership, with all the tax and legal benefits attending traditional marriage. The proposed legislation thus in no way advances the actual rights of homosexual couples. Since the Bill is unnecessary, it should be rejected.</p> <p>As the proposed legislation grants no tangible legal or tax benefits to homosexual couples, the only remaining reason for it to be passed is to demand from the rest of society an acceptance of homosexual unions as being morally good relationships equivalent in every way to traditional heterosexual life-</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>long marriage. Yet, as we have already asserted, legislation should not be enacted to make people feel happy and comfortable by coercing affirmation of their life choices from another portion of the populace, which will then itself become unhappy and uncomfortable. Rather, legislation should be enacted only when it brings clear societal benefit.</p> <p>Furthermore, as the Chief Minister admits, the proposed Bill is intensely divisive. He is entirely correct when he writes in his foreword: I recognise that the proposed legislation to allow same sex couples to be married may generate strong and polarised views, with some organisations and individuals believing very strongly that marriage can only ever be between a man and a woman.</p> <p>Thus, the only possible reason for enacting the legislation – to gain the approbation of wider society for homosexual unions by labelling them ‘marriage’ – is unachievable on the Chief Minister’s own admission. While consistent, Bible-believing Christians remain on the Island (or, indeed, anyone else with religious or philosophical objections), there will never be complete societal acceptance of so-called homosexual marriage. And, while Tynwald may declare a homosexual union to be ‘marriage’, and even drive-away Christians, its fiat can never alter the biological fact that men and women are not physically interchangeable. Homosexual relationships can never and will never be equivalent to heterosexual ones, not least because a homosexual couple’s anatomy is fundamentally incompatible, and they are unable to procreate without external assistance.</p> <p>Again, then, the legislation is shown both to be unnecessary <i>and</i> unable to achieve its presumed goal of normalizing homosexual unions. It unwisely seeks to privilege – with no concomitant societal benefit – the opinions and feelings of a very few homosexual activists (albeit some in positions of high power) over the livelihoods of those who hold sincere, rational, reality-based philosophical or religious objections to the very concept of homosexual ‘marriage’.</p> <p>The proposal is thus futile and, because it is extraordinarily divisive, damaging to the cohesion of our small Island community. It should be rejected.</p> <p>3. On the basis of its own standards, the proposed legislation is intellectually incoherent and unfair</p> <p>The stated goal of the proposed Bill is the promotion of some supposed notion of ‘fairness and tolerance’. Yet, considered on the grounds of such emotionalism, the proposed legislation is seen to be distinctly <i>unfair</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It continues to privilege couples over polygamous relationships. (The reason for marriage being between <i>two</i> people is self-evidently that our physical nature requires two people to procreate – a male and a female. Once the requirement for marriage to be between one <i>male</i> and one <i>female</i> is abandoned, as it is with same-sex unions, there remains no principled non-religious reason to prohibit polygamous relationships.) • It continues to privilege those not in a consanguineous relationship over those who would claim to be in ‘loving relationship’ with an incestuously close family member. (Once procreation is abandoned as the basis for the legal privileging of marriage, there remains no non-religious argument to proscribe incestuous relationships.) <p>If an emotional appeal to ‘fairness and tolerance’ is to be the determining principle for our marriage legislation, what then is the rational basis for prohibiting ‘loving, committed’ polygamous relationships? And why then should a man not marry his sister, nephew, niece, brother – or indeed, even his own father or mother?</p> <p>To be clear, we are strongly against extending marriage legislation to allow for such relationships, and believe that to do so would be detrimental to society. Nevertheless, it is intellectually incoherent to extend marriage to same-sex couples on the grounds of ‘fairness and tolerance’ for ‘loving, committed’ relationships (again, to use the Chief Minister’s words), but then to deny it to other kinds of professedly ‘loving, committed’ relationships. It is unfathomable that the Consultation Document fails to make even the slightest attempt to address such glaring logical difficulties with the position it advocates.</p> <p>The proposed legislation should therefore be rejected as being self-defeating in its utter inconsistency with its own stated aims.</p> <p>4. The proposed Bill would enshrine homosexual marriage in law as a second-class institution</p> <p>The Consultation Document clearly intends the proposed legislation to be understood as extending <i>existing</i> traditional marriage privileges to cover homosexual couples. However, schedule 2 part 3 of the proposed Bill borrows from a similar provision in the UK legislation and expressly states: Only conduct between the respondent and a person of the opposite sex can constitute adultery for the purposes of this section.</p> <p>Thus, whereas infidelity with someone of the same sex as one’s spouse is considered adultery for heterosexual marriage, that same infidelity is <i>not</i> regarded as adultery for the purposes of homosexual ‘marriage’.</p> <p>This provision is bizarre, <i>if</i> the legislation is truly (as the Chief Minister claims) intended to permit ‘loving, committed couples of the same sex to be married’. If the legislation is indeed for the benefit of <i>committed</i> homosexual couples, why do those supposedly committed couples need a special</p>

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	<p>definition of adultery that expressly excludes the most likely acts of homosexual infidelity that would demonstrate the <i>absence</i> of such commitment? The Consultation Document curiously fails to explain the rationale for this provision. However, a 2013 <i>Slate</i> article reveals why it is likely thought necessary (our emphasis):³</p> <p>But the thorny part of the gay marriage experiment is sex, and more precisely, monogamous sex. Mundy writes about an old study from the '80s that found that gay couples were extremely likely to have had sex outside their relationship—82 percent did. That was before AIDS and the great matrimony craze in the gay community. She also tells the story of Dan Savage, who started out wanting to be monogamous until he and his partner had kids, and then they loosened up on that in order to make their union last. "Monogamish" is what he calls his new model. But as Mundy asks, can anyone out there imagine a husband proposing that same deal to his pregnant wife?</p> <p>A long Gawker story last week explored this problem in greater detail. In the fight for marriage equality, the gay rights movement has put forth couples that look like straight ones, together forever, loyal, sharing assets. But what no one wants to talk about is that they don't necessarily represent the norm: The Gay Couples Study out of San Francisco State University—which, in following over 500 gay couples over many years is the largest on-going study of its kind—has found that about half of all couples have sex with someone other than their partner, with their partner knowing.</p> <p>In writing about the subject, gay people emphasize the aspects of their relationships that sound most wholesome and straight-like, Steven Thrasher writes. They neglect to mention that, say, in Thrasher's case, he met his partner for sex only once, and they ended up falling in love. <i>The larger point being that gay couples are very different when it comes to sex, even if this is not the convenient moment to discuss that. And in legalizing gay marriage, we are accepting a form of sanctioned marriage that is not by habit monogamous and that is inventing all kinds of new models of how to accommodate lust and desire in long-term relationships.</i></p> <p>The special adultery provision, then, would enshrine in law a lower expectation of sexual fidelity for homosexual 'marriage' than is expected of heterosexual marriage. The proposed legislation thereby acknowledges the <i>de facto</i> reality that many male homosexual couples do not wish to enter into 'loving, <i>committed</i> relationships equivalent to heterosexual marriages. What the legislation proposes is thus not the equal of faithful, monogamous heterosexual marriage, but something of a fundamentally different character that is merely <i>called</i> 'marriage'.</p> <p>Again, the proposed legislation is shown to be incoherent and self-defeating. On the one hand, it purports to offer equivalency between homosexual and heterosexual marriage. On the other, it defines a lower standard and expectation of sexual fidelity for so-called homosexual marriage. It would enshrine homosexual 'marriage' as a <i>de jure</i> second-class institution inferior to traditional heterosexual marriage.</p> <p>5. The existing marriage legislation is already entirely fair and equal</p> <p>Given that the proposed legislation continues to disadvantage certain classes of professedly 'loving, committed' relationship (e.g. those that are polygamous or incestuous), it would not therefore enact 'marriage equality' in any meaningful sense, but merely a different form of <i>unequal</i> marriage. The Bill thus implicitly admits that the question of 'fairness and tolerance' (and therefore, of the justice of the legislation) ought not to be determined by legislative restrictions upon <i>whom</i> one can marry (since the proposed legislation continues to leave significant restrictions in place), but rather by <i>which individuals</i> can avail themselves of the institution of marriage.</p> <p>The truth here is that traditional marriage, as embodied in the existing legislation, is already <i>entirely</i> fair and tolerant in the latter respect – every unmarried person, no matter his or her self-identified sexual orientation, is already perfectly at liberty to marry a suitable, willing and single person of the opposite sex. That certain people choose not to avail themselves of the legal opportunity to marry a person of the opposite sex is their right, but in no way does this indicate any deficiency, intolerance or unfairness in the existing marriage legislation.</p> <p>Thus, on the basis of the principle of 'fairness and tolerance' as advanced by the Chief Minister, the Bill is manifestly unnecessary and should therefore be rejected.</p> <p>6. The proposed legislation would further undermine the institution of marriage to the detriment of society</p> <p>In his foreword, the Chief Minister asserts that 'allowing loving, committed couples of the same sex to be married in no way undermines the institution of marriage'. The Chief Minister is wrong.</p> <p>As already discussed, the state's legitimate interest in marriage is the promotion of stable families in which children are nurtured by, as far as is possible, their biological father and mother. Given this right understanding, it is self-evidently plain that the state's interest is subverted by similarly privileging other relationships that, by their very nature, militate against this desired outcome. (This is even more the case if the stability of those other relationships is</p>

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	<p>undermined by a watered-down definition of adultery.) If those other relationships are supported by the state in the same way as marriage, then people have no incentive to maintain traditional marriages over those other relationships. Thus, traditional marriage itself is necessarily undermined. Furthermore, it is self-evident that the specialness of a thing is dependent upon its particularity: if <i>everything</i> is special, then <i>nothing</i> is. The state's historical privileging of traditional, heterosexual marriage signals that it is an institution of a special character that confers particular benefits upon society. Extending that privilege to other relationships necessarily devalues the specialness of the traditional marriage institution and weakens the strength of the signal sent by the state's support for it. To take this to its logical conclusion, one could hypothetically call every 'loving' human relationship 'marriage'. It is obvious that to do so would radically undermine marriage as an institution. It follows, then, that <i>every</i> step to lessen the particularity of traditional marriage diminishes that institution.</p> <p>We grant that the <i>Civil Partnership Act 2011</i> has already significantly undermined traditional marriage by extending the legal and tax benefits of traditional marriage to other relationships. Yet, this is not an argument for weakening marriage still further by radically redefining it, but rather for repealing the Civil Partnership Act.</p> <p>Finally, even some advocates for same-sex 'marriage' (those rather more candid than our Chief Minister) admit that it <i>will</i> change the marriage institution. Masha Gessen, a journalist and homosexual activist, made the following comments while on a panel at the 2012 Sydney Writers' Festival, Australia:⁴</p> <p>... it's a no-brainer that [homosexuals] should have the right to marry, but I also think equally that it's a no-brainer that the institution of marriage should not exist. ... fighting for gay marriage generally involves lying about what we are going to do with marriage when we get there — because we lie that the institution of marriage is not going to change, and that is a lie.</p> <p>The institution of marriage is going to change, and it should change. And again, I don't think it should exist. And I don't like taking part in creating fictions about my life. That's sort of not what I had in mind when I came out thirty years ago.</p> <p>I have three kids who have five parents, more or less. And I don't see why they shouldn't have five parents legally. I don't see why we should choose two of those parents and make them a sanctioned couple.</p> <p>Masha Gessen understands that the logic of homosexual 'marriage' ultimately leads to the destruction of the institution of marriage itself, and thus to the normalization of absurd and damaging situations such as those in which her three children 'have five parents, more or less'. If this is where the Chief Minister and his Government <i>intend</i> to take us, they should at least be honest with the electorate they serve about their intentions.</p> <p>The proposed legislation will damage the institution of marriage. It has profound, negative implications for society, some of which will take many years to become fully apparent. It should be rejected.</p> <p>7. The proposed legislation does not sufficiently protect those who hold sincere philosophical or religious beliefs in opposition to same-sex 'marriage'</p> <p>We welcome the fact that some attempt has been made via clause 8 of the proposed Bill to protect those with religious or philosophical objections to same-sex 'marriage'. However, the clause is woefully inadequate for at least the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It does not define what constitutes <i>participation</i> in a marriage ceremony. Is a florist 'participating' in a ceremony by providing flowers? What about the photographer and videographer, or the caterers, or the person who makes the cake? What about a hotelier who is asked to accommodate the newly 'married' couple? All these people may feel bound by conscience not to affirm same-sex 'marriage' in any way through their provision of goods or services. • The opt-out is expressly only for <i>religious</i> ceremonies. However, the aforementioned providers of wedding-related goods and services will no doubt generally wish to supply both religious and civil weddings. Thus, although the Consultation Document claims protection for an 'organist who usually plays at wedding services at a church', no such protection is offered for those participating in civil ceremonies. The Consultation Document paints a misleadingly one-sided and vastly over-optimistic picture of the protections offered by the proposed Bill. • Given that the opt-out is expressly <i>only</i> for religious ceremonies, the proposed legislation would immediately exclude every Bible-believing Christian from any public office or private function relating to civil marriage. Indeed, as the Consultation Document itself states, the Bill 'makes clear that the conduct of a marriage registrar or the Chief Registrar is not included in the protection provided by this section'. The Bill will, if enacted, thus directly discriminate against Christians (and others with strong religious objections to same-sex 'marriage') by rendering them unable to hold these public offices.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bill provides no protection whatsoever for those providing goods or services to married couples <i>before</i> or <i>after</i> a 'wedding' has taken place. For example, landlords or hoteliers may wish to provide accommodation only to married couples. Such service providers would have no protection under the proposed legislation if they were to decline to provide service to a 'married' homosexual couple. <p>These concerns are not hypothetical. Even though same-sex marriage legislation is a very new phenomenon, examples already abound of people in various jurisdictions being persecuted by the authorities and suffering material harm due to their being unable in good conscience to provide goods or services relating to homosexual 'marriage' or relationships. For example, consider these reported cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'A federal judge jailed a Kentucky clerk ... for contempt after she repeatedly defied his order to issue marriage licenses to gay and straight couples, imposing his authority in the most high-profile challenge to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling legalizing same-sex marriage. Kim Davis, the Rowan County clerk, had unsuccessfully appealed all the way to the high court to delay an order by the judge that she issue marriage licenses to all qualified couples, gay or heterosexual.'⁵ • 'Oregon officials announced that Aaron and Melissa Klein, owners of Sweetcakes by Melissa, would be fined \$135,000 for their refusal to bake a cake for a lesbian wedding'.⁶ • 'A custom cake baker in suburban Denver can't cite his religious convictions in declining to make a wedding cake for two men, a Colorado appeals court ruled today. "Cake artist" Jack Phillips said he gladly serves gays and lesbians in his family business. But, Phillips said, he could not in good conscience design a wedding cake for a same-sex couple when, as a Christian, he believes that marriage is the union of a man and a woman.'⁷ • Barronelle Stutzman, 'A Christian florist and grandmother who declined to provide flowers for a same-sex wedding because of her Christian belief in traditional marriage has been fined \$1,001 by a Washington court and will be held liable to pay the legal fees incurred by the gay couple, which could "devastate" her financially.'⁸ • 'A U.K. judge has ruled that a Christian-run bakery discriminated against gay customers when it refused to make a cake featuring the "Sesame Street" characters Bert and Ernie with a pro same-sex marriage slogan. District Judge Isobel Brownlie ruled at Belfast County Court on Tuesday that Ashers Bakery, the defendants, "have unlawfully discriminated against the plaintiff on grounds of sexual discrimination," The Belfast Telegraph reported.'⁹ • 'The New York State Division of Human Rights (DHR) has ruled that the Roman Catholic owners [Robert and Cynthia Gifford] of an Albany-area farm violated the civil rights of a lesbian couple when they declined to host the couple's same-sex "marriage" ceremony in 2012.'¹⁰ • 'Peter and Hazelmary Bull, the Christian hoteliers fined for refusing a single room to two homosexual men in September 2008, have lost their appeal to the UK's Supreme Court, with the court ruling that their company policy was "discriminatory." Despite the fact that the couple proved that their policy applied equally to any unmarried couples, and not just homosexuals, all five judges ruled the Bulls' policy to be a case of illegal discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, and dismissed their appeal. Two of the judges said the discrimination was "indirect," but unjustified.'¹¹ <p>The Consultation Document asserts (section 4.1) that 'it is not considered that the proposals would have any impact on the business or third sectors'. It thereby demonstrates how that document's authors and the drafters of the Bill have utterly failed to understand how the proposals comprehensively infringe the personal and religious liberties of those engaged in marriage-related businesses.</p> <p>If the proposed Bill is enacted in its present state, the evidence from other jurisdictions is abundantly clear that Christians and others with sincere religious objections to same-sex relationships will be further marginalized and oppressed. The Bill would impose upon many of them deep economic and emotional harm, and force them to choose between their livelihoods and their faith. In the name of 'tolerance and fairness', the proposed legislation will thus entrench a deeply unfair <i>intolerance</i> of Christians who wish to live quiet, productive, law-abiding lives in accord with their deeply held religious beliefs. The legislation is exceedingly unjust and discriminatory. It must be rejected.</p> <p>It ought to be self-evident that it is acutely inequitable and incongruent for an allegedly pluralistic and tolerant society to compel individuals to labour to provide goods and services in a manner that violates their consciences. If the proposed legislation is nevertheless enacted, it is thus essential that it is with the addition of a clause expressly guaranteeing the freedom (without the risk of subsequent censure or sanction) of <i>any</i> individual or organization to decline to provide goods or services for <i>any</i> reason or purpose that they believe to be contrary to their religious or philosophical beliefs. It is also essential that there be wording to guarantee the freedom of individuals and organizations to continue to advocate against homosexual 'marriage'. The draft Equality</p>

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	<p>Bill should likewise be amended to guarantee these vital freedoms.</p> <p>8. Tynwald has no public mandate to enact the proposed Bill</p> <p>The Consultation Document advances no evidence whatsoever of any widespread desire by the people of the Isle of Man for the introduction of same-sex 'marriage'. This is a measure for which no one on the Island has voted.</p> <p>Though the Consultation Document provides a litany of other jurisdictions that have introduced similar legislation, it fails to note that a great many of these introductions have been by government action or judicial edict, regardless of – and often contrary to – the wishes of the general population. For example, the 2008 democratically passed proposition providing that 'only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California' was subsequently overturned by judicial fiat.¹² The recent June 2015 decision of the US Supreme Court in <i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i> – astonishingly cited and mischaracterized by the Consultation Document as a <i>positive</i> precedent – likewise overrode numerous democratically enacted state-level bans on same-sex marriage. As Chief Justice Roberts wrote in his scathing dissent to that decision (our emphasis):¹³</p> <p><i>Stealing this issue from the people will for many cast a cloud over same-sex marriage, making a dramatic social change that much more difficult to accept.</i></p> <p>The majority's decision is an act of will, not legal judgment. The right it announces has no basis in the Constitution or this Court's precedent. The majority expressly disclaims judicial "caution" and omits even a pretense of humility, openly relying on its desire to remake society according to its own "new insight" into the "nature of injustice." Ante, at 11, 23. <i>As a result, the Court invalidates the marriage laws of more than half the States and orders the transformation of a social institution that has formed the basis of human society for millennia, for the Kalahari Bushmen and the Han Chinese, the Carthaginians and the Aztecs. Just who do we think we are?</i></p> <p>We find it appalling that the authors of the Consultation Document should consider such blatant judicial disregard for the Constitution of the United States and the democratically expressed wishes of its people to be a worthy precedent that the Isle of Man should emulate. We instead concur with Chief Justice Roberts – it is unwise for matters such as these to be stolen from the people, whether that be by judges or by MHKs.</p> <p>Traditional, heterosexual marriage is, as Chief Justice Roberts writes, 'a social institution that has formed the basis of human society for millennia'. We thus consider it unwise and harmful to community cohesion to introduce such a profoundly significant, divisive and disruptive measure without the express consent of the people, preferably sought by way of referendum. If, despite having no democratic mandate to do so, Tynwald nevertheless hubristically takes it upon itself to force-through such manifestly incoherent and discriminatory legislation as that proposed, overturning in the process the millennia-old 'basis of human society', the consequences for our community are likely to be both grave and irreparable.</p> <p>9. The proposed legislation is a rebellion against God's moral Law, blasphemes the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is thus greatly offensive to Almighty God and to many people of faith</p> <p>We have hitherto endeavoured to confine ourselves to arguments rooted in logic and reason that people of all religions – and those of none – should readily comprehend.</p> <p>However, like other sincere, confessional Christians rooted in the historic, orthodox Christian Faith, our worldview is grounded in what that Faith has always considered to be the authoritative, written Word of the Almighty God, maker of Heaven and Earth – namely, the 66 books of the Christian Bible. Whilst we have no expectation that this worldview will be shared by most of the Island's legislators, a brief outline of the Christian understanding of marriage may nevertheless help them to understand why Christians regard this particular proposed Bill with such grave alarm. Be in no doubt, if Tynwald passes this legislation it will be declaring its open hostility to the Almighty God, to the Christian Religion, and to all those who sincerely hold the teachings of the historic, orthodox Christian Faith.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Christians believe that the one Almighty Triune God in three Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – created the entire universe. As such, we are His creatures and obligated to live our lives in obedience to His will. ii. We believe that God Himself instituted marriage to be between one man and one woman. The Lord Jesus Christ – the second Person of the Triune God, who took on human flesh and became a man – affirms this by quoting from the biblical <i>Genesis</i> account of creation. These words of Jesus are recorded in Matthew 19:4-6:¹⁴ <p>And He [Jesus] answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."</p>

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	<p>iii. Since marriage was instituted by God to be between a man and his (female) wife, it follows that the purported institution of so-called same-sex marriage is a fundamental rebellion by man against God His Creator. Such rebellion justly incurs God's condemnation and wrath.</p> <p>iv. As the Bible teaches that God is good, and that all He commands us is for our own benefit, this rebellion against the clearly expressed will of our Creator God must necessarily be to our own harm and detriment.</p> <p>v. Furthermore, as the Apostle Paul explains in Ephesians 5:23-33, the institution of marriage between a husband and wife is a picture of the relationship of the Lord Jesus Christ to His Church: For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.</p> <p>vi. If every marriage between a woman and a man is a typological picture of the Lord Jesus Christ's self-sacrificial love and giving of Himself for His Church, it follows that the purported marrying of two people of the same sex is a blasphemous corruption of that picture. Same-sex 'marriage' erases the distinction between the two spouses in the marriage typology, and thus erases the distinction between the Lord Jesus Christ (who is God) and His Church (His creature). It is therefore a direct, idolatrous blasphemy against the person of the Lord Jesus Christ – God in human flesh – and His work of laying down His life to save His own Bride, which is the Church.</p> <p>vii. Not only has God instituted marriage to be between one man and one woman, but He has commanded all humankind to adhere to an abiding moral Law rooted in the very nature and character of God Himself. This moral Law is epitomized by the Ten Commandments, and summarized by the twin injunctions to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves.</p> <p>viii. When honestly considered, these Ten Commandments reveal every single naturally conceived human being to be guilty of breaking God's Law. We have <i>all</i> failed to love God with our whole heart, mind, soul and strength, and we have all failed to love our neighbour as ourselves. Indeed, the Bible tells us that each one of us is born with a sinful nature that is in open rebellion against God, and that we have each deservedly earned His fierce, eternal wrath and condemnation.</p> <p>ix. Christians thus call all people to turn away from their sin, echoing the words of the Apostle Paul when he said, 'Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man [Jesus] whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.' (Acts 17:30-31)</p> <p>x. In addition to God's Law, Christians also proclaim the Gospel, the Good News that the Lord Jesus Christ became a human being, lived the life of perfect obedience to God's Law that we are unable to achieve, and died on a Roman execution cross in the place of sinners. Jesus there willingly took upon Himself the punishment and wrath of God due to His people. God the Father then raised Jesus from the dead, thereby declaring Jesus' sacrifice in the place of sinners to be pleasing and acceptable.</p> <p>xi. By faith – that is, by trusting in the sure grace and mercy of God promised by this Gospel – Christians believe that God the Father accounts the perfect righteousness and obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ as if it truly belonged to the repentant sinner. And likewise, through faith, we believe that God counts the self-sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross as being an acceptable punishment for all the sin of the now repentant, trusting sinner. Thus, through faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, underserving sinners are graciously reconciled with God, cleansed from their sin, and saved from the eternal punishment that would otherwise be their due. Such saving faith is itself a gracious gift from God.</p> <p>xii. Christians, then, do not oppose same-sex 'marriage' out of a desire to denigrate or disparage homosexuals, but rather because we love them. Since we believe the very concept of same-sex 'marriage' to be a blasphemous rebellion against God's revealed will, it must inevitably be harmful to those participating in it, and damaging to the society that permits it. We Christians therefore have a duty to love all our neighbours by telling</p>

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	<p>them these truths, and by calling them to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We do this not to condemn anyone, but in the hope that our neighbours may be saved from the wrath of the holy and just Almighty God through believing the Good News of the Lord Jesus and His life, death and resurrection for sinners. We Christians too are sinners, saved not by our own merit or works, but by the underserved favour of God toward us in Christ. We do not therefore believe ourselves superior to other people, but rather wish them also to come to a saving knowledge of the grace of God through the Good News of Jesus.</p> <p>It is with this love for our neighbours in mind that we beg the Chief Minister, the Cabinet Office, and Tynwald to reject this profoundly objectionable, ill-considered, intellectually incoherent, intolerant, discriminatory, unjust, rebellious, and blasphemous Bill.</p> <hr/> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peter S. Sprigg, 'Homosexual Parent Study: Summary of Findings', <i>Family Research Council</i>, 23 August 2012, http://www.frc.org/issuebrief/homosexual-parent-study-summary-of-findings. 2. 'Homosexual Parenting: Is It Time For Change?', <i>American College of Pediatricians</i>, March 2013, http://www.acpeds.org/the-college-speaks/position-statements/parenting-issues/homosexual-parenting-is-it-time-for-change. 3. Hanna Rosin, 'The Dirty Little Secret: Most Gay Couples Aren't Monogamous', <i>Slate</i>, 26 June 2013, http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2013/06/26/most_gay_couples_aren_t_monogamous_will_straight_couples_go_monogamish.html. 4. Johanna Dasteel, 'Homosexual activist says gay "marriage" isn't about equality, it's about destroying marriage', <i>LifeSiteNews.com</i>, 1 May 2013, https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/homosexual-activist-says-gay-marriage-isnt-about-equality-its-about-destroy. 5. Arian Campo-Flores, 'Defiant Kentucky Clerk Jailed for Refusing to Issue Same-Sex Marriage Licenses', <i>The Wall Street Journal</i>, 3 September 2015, http://www.wsj.com/articles/defiant-kentucky-clerk-to-appear-in-court-over-refusal-to-issue-same-sex-marriage-licenses-1441295805. 6. Billy Hallowell, 'Baker Has a Message for the Gov't Official Who Just Fined Him \$135,000 for Declining a Gay Wedding Cake: "He's Doing This With the Wrong Christian"', <i>The Blaze</i>, 3 July 2015, http://www.theblaze.com/stories/2015/07/03/christian-baker-has-a-message-for-the-govt-official-who-just-fined-him-135000-for-declining-a-gay-wedding-cake-hes-doing-this-with-the-wrong-christian/. 7. Ken McIntyre, 'Christian Baker Must Make Cakes Celebrating Gay Marriage, Appeals Court Rules', <i>The Daily Signal</i>, 13 August 2015, http://dailysignal.com/2015/08/13/christian-baker-must-make-cakes-celebrating-gay-marriage-appeals-court-rules/. 8. Samuel Smith, 'Christian Grandma-Florist Fined \$1,001, Ordered to Work Gay Weddings but Refuses, Says She Won't Betray Jesus; State Threatens to Take Her Home, Business Away', <i>The Christian Post</i>, 30 March 2015, http://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-grandma-florist-fined-1001-ordered-to-work-gay-weddings-but-refuses-says-she-wont-betray-jesus-state-threatens-to-take-her-home-business-away-136613/. 9. Stoyan Zaimov, 'UK Christian Bakery Found Guilty of "Sexual Discrimination" for Refusing to Bake Gay Marriage "Bert and Ernie" Cake', <i>The Christian Post</i>, 19 May 2015, http://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-uk-bakery-forced-to-pay-fine-for-discrimination-against-gay-people-for-refusing-to-bake-pro-same-sex-marriage-bert-and-ernie-cake-139288/. 10. Kirsten Andersen, 'Catholic couple fined \$13,000 for refusing to host same-sex "wedding" at their farm', <i>LifeSiteNews.com</i>, 20 August 2014, https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/catholic-couple-fined-13000-for-refusing-to-host-same-sex-wedding-at-their. 11. Hilary White, 'Christian B&B owners lose Supreme Court appeal: forced to sell business after gay couple complains', <i>LifeSiteNews.com</i>, 28 November 2013, https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/christian-bb-owners-lose-supreme-court-appeal-forced-to-sell-business-after. 12. Dylan Matthews, 'The Supreme Court ended Proposition 8. Here's what that means.', <i>The Washington Post</i>, 26 June 2013, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/06/26/the-supreme-court-ended-proposition-8-heres-what-that-means/. 13. Chief Justice Roberts, 'OBERGEFELL v. HODGES', <i>Supreme Court of the United States</i>, 26 June 2015, http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/14pdf/14-556_3204.pdf. 14. Scripture quotations are taken from <i>The New King James Version</i> (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982).
Marsha West	<p>Hello from America! I live in Oregon, USA. Not long ago Oregon went to the polls and voted to approve same-sex "marriage." Why? Because voters didn't want to be viewed as homophobes, bigots and haters, terms used by the Left to shame people into accepting what is clearly a sexual perversion. Here's what same-sex marriage has led to:</p>

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	<p>In Canada Homosexual Men "Divorce" to Become Threesome, Now Plan to Use Sisters as Surrogates http://bereanresearch.org/homosexual-men-divorce-to-become-threesome-now-plan-to-use-sisters-as-surrogates/</p> <p>In America: How the Media Are Promoting Polyamory. The New "Marriage Equality"? http://bereanresearch.org/how-the-media-are-promoting-polyamory-the-new-marriage-equality/</p> <p>Married lesbian "throuple" expecting first child http://nypost.com/2014/04/23/married-lesbian-threesome-expecting-first-child/</p> <p>Is this what you want to happen to the Isle of Man? Children need both a mother and a father -- a mum and a dad.</p>
Name withheld as requested (Opposed – 2)	<p>In accordance with the invitation contained in the discussion document published by the IOM Government, I wish to make a response as follows, using the four questions presented in the document as my framework.</p> <p>I am not responding on behalf of any organisation.</p> <p>Q1 Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be allowed to marry ? I disagree, for the reasons summarised below.</p> <p>Q2 Do you have any comments on basing legislation on the UK model I do not have a view on this</p> <p>Q3 Do you have any comments on the draft bill Yes. In particular, I believe that the case quoted where a civil registrar refuses to conduct a same sex marriage, there should be a specific safeguard to allow the employee to act according to his or her personal convictions. Also, the same protection should apply to any professionals, such as teachers, who feel that teaching about same-sex relationships would go against their genuinely-held religious views or personal conviction.</p> <p>Q4 Do you have any other relevant comments. Yes, I would like to offer the following more detailed observations.</p> <p>1)..Religious Aspects Firstly, taking the matter from a religious viewpoint, our society has been founded on the scriptures and teachings of both the Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament), and the teachings of Jesus (New Testament). The new and the old are both relevant, since Jesus himself taught from the Hebrew scriptures, and, of course, they are still embraced by those who are of the Jewish faith. Thus we have a religious framework on which our laws are based, which dates back thousands of years, and which has made stable and sustainable society possible. In the beginning God made man, and because man was alone, God made him a suitable companion. This suitability included complementary personality as well as bodies which allow physical union in a way which is directly linked to the procreation of the species. This union carries with it joys and responsibilities and lays the foundations for families in which the offspring are genetically related to both partners, thus cementing the partnership of the parents, and creating an unbreakable bond with their children. This tight-knit unit, the family, has been the building block of all successful civilisations, and wherever societies have allowed the family unit to be undermined, society has suffered the consequences. Because each child has both female and male parents and mentors, the children benefit from the complementary but different personalities of the two genders. This male-female union <i>is</i> Marriage, and where marriage has been held in honour, it has been the basis for strong and caring societies. It is hard to see how a same sex couple could offer this kind of parenting.</p> <p>1.1)...They cannot procreate and produce genetically related children by any natural means, and any adopted children would be unable to access the benefits of mixed gender role models.</p>

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	<p>1.2)...To be valid, a marriage requires consummation. This requires a physical union by bodies suited and designed for this purpose, leading to pregnancy and childbirth. Same sex couples cannot consummate a marriage in this way, and the alternatives are generally forbidden in both the old and new testaments. Thus, the only form of marriage which is consistent with the teachings of the scriptures is marriage between a man and a woman for the purpose of procreation and the upbringing of genetically related children.</p> <p>1.3)...There is nothing in scripture preventing same sex couples living together (in a celibate relationship), and, of course Jesus urges us all to love one another. For example, in the old testament it is reported that David (of David & Goliath fame) 'loved' Jonathan, and this is a noble brotherly love of which we still see outstanding examples today despite the tendency for modern society to emphasise erotic love.</p> <p>1.4)...There is ample provision in existing law for anyone to leave all their worldly goods to another person, even without recourse to a civil partnership. Thus, all the noble benefits of a celibate loving relationship can be achieved within the framework of both the law and the scriptures without any need to re-define the long established institution of marriage.</p> <p>2)..Secular Arguments Since many of those who choose to read my response to the consultation will have no religious leanings, I offer the following observations based on the concept of seeking good of the whole of society, as opposed to one sector alone. Firstly, the present legislation permitting civil partnerships offers every practical benefit which is enjoyed by married couples. Thus there is no measurable benefit to be attained by converting this to marriage. As stated fully in my previous section, marriage is both a joyous and also a very responsible undertaking. Persons entering into it are undertaking to raise the next generation of children in a stable and long lasting family unit (even though, as we all know, this is not always achieved). Thus the use of the word 'Married' is a badge of honour by which the rest of society recognises their endeavours, and the hard work , patience and perseverance which will be required of them over many years. To adopt the word for other unions removes this unique aspect of recognition. (just as awarding everyone in a race a Gold Medal would undermine its value) Married couples who have enhanced our society by promising and maintaining fidelity over many years deserve our admiration and recognition. The least we can do in return is to preserve their 'badge of honour' – i.e. the right to the unique use of the word 'Married'. I would therefore ask those promoting equal marriage to consider this. You have based many of your arguments on love, fairness, and tolerance, and I would ask you to demonstrate these virtues by recognising the very significant contribution made to society by our existing married couples. Please, please do not deny them their unique place in our society by removing the recognition of the special contribution they make to our community. Same sex couples already have their own recognition in the form of the Civil Partnership. Surely it is better to have your own specific title and recognition rather than one borrowed from another sector in society ??</p> <p>3)...Genetics One significant spin-off enjoyed as a consequence of our existing marriage laws is that they conveniently and straightforwardly protect society from inbreeding, as we can identify genetically-related people, and have laws in place preventing marriage between close relatives. Thus we are able minimise the risk of children being born with the avoidable illnesses and disabilities which inbreeding can cause. If an unintended consequence of same sex marriage is that it makes marriage less special for men and women, we could see a further increase in the kind of loose relationships which have already compromised our society. Thus, we could lose some of the genetic benefits of maintaining the well-regulated relationships which we currently have, and increase the number of children suffering from insecurity due to them being brought up in less stable home environments. Therefore, taking all these matters into account, I feel that the arguments for retaining the status quo outweigh the perceived benefit for those wishing to bring about this significant and far reaching change to our existing marriage laws. On balance, I therefore vote to retain the status quo.</p>

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	<p>3)...Legal, Safeguarding and Attitude Issues</p> <p>My final paragraph relates to the way we should treat one another, which ever side of the argument we are on. Already, Manx Radio has given air time to someone who referred to anyone opposing the proposals as 'having crawled out of the woodwork', and condemned them as homophobic.</p> <p>This sort of intolerance should be unacceptable in a civilised society, and it is my hope that people of all convictions will be held in equal respect both during and after the consultation process.</p> <p>Whatever the outcome, it will not suit all of us. That is the nature of democracy.</p> <p>We have the debate and then live peaceably with the outcome.</p> <p>Any legislation arising out of these consultation must protect people of all persuasions.</p> <p>So, to those penning the legislation I ask that you recognise these issues and make it clear in the legislation that the positive values of tolerance, mutual respect, and harmony are enshrined in any law you enact.</p> <p>I would also ask for ordinary people to be protected from harassment and defamation, and for those in public service to be protected from dismissal or prosecution if they genuinely act in accordance with their personal convictions or religious beliefs.</p>
Peter Pfeifer, Canada	<p>I thank you for the opportunity for input into this your consultation process.</p> <p>As a just retired married man who has witnessed the decline of societal values accelerate at a seeming phenomenal rate under the guise of "progressive thinking" or "fairness" or "tolerance", I urge you, I beg you not to go the way of the deceived world.</p> <p>Marriage is a special union which can only be entered into by one man and one woman who bring their unique God given abilities into a relationship, the fruit of which is children who can be raised and nurtured properly by a mother and father. I realize this family structure seems to be disintegrating before our very eyes and what is being left in its wake in much confusion and misery.</p> <p>Just read some of the many articles available now regarding the free fall of values into; three-way marriages, transgenderism, a father-daughter wanting permission to marry, and so on.</p> <p>Same-sex marriage is just the tip of the iceberg.</p> <p>When I was a young lad and wanted permission to do something outside of my boundaries I would try to justify my desires to my parents with, "well everybody else can do that". My parents would respond with, "well if everyone else is going to jump off the bridge, are you going to jump also?" Just because a lot of other countries have committed a serious rebellious act against a Holy God does not make it a good thing! There will be serious consequences.</p> <p>I urge you to be strong and stand against this wave that has washed over so many.</p> <p>Do not permit same-sex marriage in your homeland.</p>
John Devine The Rev Monsignor John Devine OBE VF MA Parish Priest and Area Dean St Mary of the Isle on behalf of Roman Catholic Community	<p>Thank you for your invitation to Churches Alive in Mann drawing our attention to the Isle of Man Government Consultation Document on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill. I write with a response from the Roman Catholic Community on the Island.</p> <p>Consultation Questions</p> <p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? Response: We disagree</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? Response: The Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales opposed the passing of same sex marriage legislation in the UK. Its reasons for doing so are shared by the Roman Catholic Community in the Isle of Man (see below).</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? Response: Whereas the Catholic Community in the Isle of Man affirms the principle of respect for every individual irrespective of their sexual orientation and affirms their right to live in stable committed relationships (civil partnerships) it opposes the redefinition of the institution of marriage that the Same Sex Couples Bill wishes to establish.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Response: We believe that, by definition, marriage is an exclusive committed union between a man and woman. It has existed from the beginning for the couple's mutual enrichment and support and is open to the procreation of children. Marriage between a man and a woman is a basic building block of family and society.</p>
Mrs Ruth Tickle	<p>I email in order to set forth my opposition to the current idea of introducing the legalisation of same sex marriages on the Island. I am a Bible believing christian and therefore believe that a marriage should be as stated in the Bible between a man and woman only. I would like to stress that I am in no way homophobic, I infact have many friends who are gay, and I hold nothing personally against them. But I do strongly believe we have to protect the right and true meaning of a marriage. Thank you for considering my views.</p>
Raymond and Susan Richardson	<p>We are writing in response to the Government's request for views on the Draft Marriage of Same Sex Couples Bill. Before homosexuality was made legal many years ago, the late Matthew Else of Peel, was quoted as saying: "Homosexual activists will never be satisfied." He further said that if the law was to be changed, there would be pressure for more changes and "Who knows where it would end?" If one were to look back through the various letters and news articles at that time, you will find that the gay lobby vehemently denied this. They said that they simply wanted to be free to carry on their lives in their own homes behind closed doors, without fear of imprisonment or reprisals. They said they wanted nothing more than 'freedom to practice their lives without fear' and those of us who opposed the legalisation of homosexuality said it was the thin end of the wedge. If it had been suggested to the gay lobby then, that in a few years time they would be wanting same sex marriage they would have denied it. Yet here we are. If marriage is to be redefined, there is no reason why one day in the future, heterosexual marriages will be discriminated against. You say that is ridiculous? Why? Look what has happened in the relatively few years since homosexuality has been legal in the UK. It is indisputably the case that the supporters of 'gay rights' have, just as foreseen, pushed for more and more - and succeeded. Those who support them, claim to have an interest in human rights and equality, but in practice they actively suppress the rights of others. As far as 'equality' goes, how is it equal that according to this Bill, there can be no adultery between same sex couples - yet it is to be called 'marriage'? Concerning the rights of others, it is now almost impossible for people to express a view concerning homosexuality without fear of being taken to court. The case brought against the McArthur family who own Ashers Bakers Company in N. Ireland shows how bigoted and intolerant the gay community is, of any view but their own. If the Isle of Man is now forced to pass a law legalising 'marriage' of same sex couples, who indeed, knows where it will end? Those in supported a changes in the law in the past, and for this current proposed Bill, often express a very real hatred for what they called our 'narrow minded bigotry'. But can they deny that we were right? It <i>was</i> the thin edge of the wedge in 1992 when homosexuality was legalised. What more proof is needed - we are now debating same sex marriage just twenty three years later. We are totally and absolutely opposed to this bill being passed for the reasons stated. We are also opposed because we are Christians and believe that it is against God's laws, and whichever country dares to ignore those laws will one day regret it.</p>
Reverend Des Deehan on behalf of Elim Pentecostal Churches	<p>On behalf of the three Elim Pentecostal Churches on the Isle of Man (Onchan, Ramsey & Peel) I would like to submit our response (below) to the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill - Consultation Document. I have also included the official stance of our governing body the EFGA (Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance) that is based in the UK.</p> <p>Response to the Consultation Questions</p> <p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? <i>We can not agree that same sex couples should be married!</i></p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? <i>As per the official stance of the Elim Pentecostal Movement UK (EFGA) which we agree with and have to abide by, we would ask for an absolute guarantee that the legislation (if it proceeds on the basis above) would provide the necessary protection for Churches and Faith groups. We are aware of the safeguards that are listed for Churches & Faith groups in the proposal but based on previous experience of seeing sensitive laws being adapted after a period of time we would want to see that the safeguards for protecting Churches & Ministers are future proof.</i></p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p>

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	<p><i>Whilst we do not either wish or expect those of a non-faith perspective to agree with our beliefs and stance on this issue, we also do not see why the existing laws on Civil Partnerships can not be changed to provide the level of equality and protection that 'same sex' couples should be entitled to in a fair and just society.</i></p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? <i>If this issue is to a degree based on the subject of equality (or the perception of equality) then this could lead to further changes in the law that would continue to undermine the status of marriage.</i> <i>Where people groups with different beliefs such as those who believe in polygamy where to press for equal rights in relation to marriage.</i></p> <p>EFGA STATEMENT The Conference adopted the proposal that Elim requires all its Ministers, Church Officers, Leaders and all those involved in its various ministries to uphold the Biblical standards of morality and not to promote or be involved in any homosexual relationship or partnership or any sexual conduct outside of heterosexual marriage. Such action or relationship will usually result in the removal of a person from their office or position within Elim. Similarly, membership will not be approved to those who promote or are within such a relationship and may be withdrawn from those who promote or enter into such a relationship after having previously been accepted as a member.</p> <p>The Constitution also states under Working Arrangements, III – THE MINISTER AND HIS CHURCH 7. Marriage - Elim upholds the biblical and historical definition of marriage as being the union of a man and a woman. Therefore Elim does not recognize marriage between persons of the same sex and no Elim church shall be permitted to hold such a ceremony and neither shall any Elim minister be permitted to officiate at such a ceremony including any blessing of a same sex union.</p>
Matt Rees	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? I am recognising more and more that people in 2015 are relating in different ways and there is a real importance in us focussing on what our population are doing and how we can best support them, allow them to live their life's and enjoy their time here on the Isle of Man. In response to this question personally I feel that marriage is term which for thousands of years has been used to bring man and woman together within the context of a religious establishment or faith context, my concern will same sex couple's getting married is it re-defines something which has been long been established as a religious term of man and woman coming together in Union before God. I really want to see Laws and support that will help Same Sex couple's to have the best support from the Government and community. One of my concerns is I feel changing the definition of marriage will cause potential challenge down the line into the future as the definition will be potentially changed again allowing for polygamy, or contract based marriage as seen in other nations across the world who are being challenged on it at the moment after redefining the definition of marriage. I think this decision isn't something that we should take lightly and should be considered over a longer based enquiry, there may also be other options to pursue such as strengthening civil partnerships and the laws around them here on the island.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? I can understand that the UK legislation has had a long process of people inputting before it went through to Government however my personal feeling was that this was rushed through parliament without giving enough time to consult more people and not allowing a debate around the principle of marriage. One major concern for me is that on the UK bill adultery is no longer seen as an area which breaks the covenant of marriage which for me as a youth worker on the Island is upsetting because it is often cases of unfaithfulness which damage our younger children growing up. I believe marriage is special union which shouldn't be treated lightly. One other concern perhaps I have is that in the UK the legislation is relatively new and untested so we can be unsure what lessons we need to take from it or adapt our laws here on the island, my thoughts are perhaps we should pursue another nation's which has been longer established and seek advice from them, the likelihood is that with us being a smaller population there is going to be a much rapider effect of any law being passed on the island is proportion to many other nations so any new law in any context should be highly thought through from many differing angles.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? Although I have recognised that protection of religious organisations has been listed within the bill I have concern that the protection of those whose individual conscience may disagree isn't protected strong enough and the likelihood is that this could move towards prosecution just like in France & the</p>

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	<p>US where there have been a few stories recently about prosecution because of personal conscience opinion. If this legislation is put through speaking from conscience potentially becomes not fully protected by legislation which challenges people's abilities to act based on religious belief.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>As a Christian on the Isle of Man I can 100% say that my church services and congregations are open to having our facilities available without prejudice to people of any sexuality to join us regularly. A couple of comments perhaps on the bill is that the draft legislation appears to have already come to an agreed outcome and with a much shorter consultation period as the bill's content is deemed as "relatively simple and straightforward" concerns me because it appears a real focus on the legal basis of this rather than thinking of perhaps other potential implications from this decision. It also does appear that the majority of groups approached to comment come from a stance of approval than perhaps disapproval or of a differing opinion of some degree to the proposal. I feel that perhaps a longer consultation time and approaching more sources may be beneficial before moving ahead with this decision.</p>
Leadership Team of Broadway Baptist Church	<p>RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON MARRIAGE (SAME SEX COUPLES) BILL</p> <p>This response has been prepared by the Leadership Team of Broadway Baptist Church, and is informed by a congregation-wide consultation exercise. Our discussions demonstrated that the issues raised by the draft bill will elicit a wide variety of responses, and will touch on deeply held beliefs and needs, both among Christians and in the wider Island community. With that in mind, we offer this response in an attitude of respectful listening and, where necessary, constructive disagreement.</p> <p>Question One: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>Our starting point is that everyone, whatever their gender or sexuality, is equal because we are created by a good and loving God, in his own image and are loved by Him. It is our duty and privilege to also love one another unconditionally.</p> <p>We believe that a crucial aspect of being created in God's image, is that every woman and man has free will to choose how to live. God shows us good and right ways to live, which contribute to personal good and societal flourishing. He exhorts every person, made in his image, to reflect that image through our life choices.</p> <p>Marriage, we believe, is rooted in God's creation mandate: man and woman created equal but distinct, joining together in sexual union to become "one flesh." Monogamous union between one woman and one man can be traced as the clear trajectory of the Bible's witness, and has also been the basis for marriage within most world cultures for at least fifteen hundred years.</p> <p>People's rights, freedoms and protections should not be determined by their sexuality. The current civil partnership legislation provides same sex couples with legal recognition and a range of legal advantages akin to marriage. We support this, and would encourage the Government to extend civil partnerships to mixed sex couples and to people in other types of support-giving relationships who would benefit from the legal and civic recognition afforded by civil partnerships.</p> <p>However, marriage has a spiritual element as well as a legal element. We believe that the spiritual aspect of marriage is necessarily between one man and one woman, as part of God's creation mandate for all people.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this belief, we recognise that the "Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill" will prevail, and we wish to offer both tolerance and welcome to all, while holding to our own biblically-informed beliefs.</p> <p>Question Two: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>Given that the Island's marriage legislation currently correlates closely to marriage legislation in parts of the United Kingdom, there seems little point in re-inventing the wheel. It would seem wise, however, to review any early case law precedents emerging in the UK from the legislation, as there has been little opportunity to judge the long-term impact of UK legislation.</p> <p>Question Three: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>As with the Equality Bill, there are difficult issues with regard to balancing freedoms which conflict with each other. We believe that, largely, the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill, achieves a helpful balance. We are pleased to see that churches and other religious organisations, and the individuals within them, would have the right to either opt in or opt out of participation in same sex marriages. This is a crucial provision, and we would urge that this is not diluted in any way.</p> <p>In the same vein of protecting the rights and conscience of individuals whose beliefs are informed by their religious faith, we urge the Government to</p>

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	<p>extend the right to 'opt-out' to registrars. Religious faith, by its nature, informs the whole of a person's life, so cannot be restricted to a merely private sphere. Not to offer an opt-out to registrars inevitably sets up a conflict. We believe it would be damaging to Manx society if certain roles were effectively closed to people of faith. It should be easy enough for to take account of these conscience concerns without making a same sex couple feel in any way devalued, for instance by adapting duty rotas for registrars or providing appropriately trained deputies for the registrars.</p> <p>The IoM has a long and honourable tradition of not over-legislating or over-regulating, under-lying which is a strong principle of protecting personal freedoms. We feel, in the hard decisions such as for registrars above, that the rules should err on the side of preserving personal conscience freedoms, particularly where this can be solved by simple methods.</p> <p>Question Four: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>The draft bill demonstrates the complex relationship between the State and the Church.</p> <p>A significant strand of historical Baptist identity is a belief that, while Government offices should be occupied by people of all faiths and none, there should be a clear separation between Church and State. This is evidenced in Baptist disestablishment views.</p> <p>The point we make here is much wider than the draft Bill before us, but has a considerable bearing on this and other marriage legislation. We would like to see the legal recognition of marriages in the Isle of Man, become a purely civil function. Effectively, this could mean significantly extending and re-imagining the current civil partnership legislation. For churches, this would mean that we would lose our current role in performing the legal and civil aspect of marriages. Instead, we would offer faith-based marriage ceremonies. This would be similar to the situation in the Netherlands and other European countries.</p> <p>Such a separation between the Government's role and the Church's role in marriages would lead to greater clarity and would remove unnecessary areas of conflict between Church and State.</p>
<p>Gary Kieswetter, on behalf of Living Hope Community Church</p>	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> We believe that all people are created equal and are equal in dignity. Some are choosing to relate in different ways, as with existing Civil Partnerships. We accept that as a result there is a need for both legal protection and the ability to make a public declaration of commitment.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> However, the institution of marriage for millennia is founded on a man and a woman. True marriage is not an arbitrary construct; it is founded on the different, complementary natures of men and women.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ability to procreate is part of definition of marriage – not obligation but part of definition. It seems reasonable for the state to treat the one type of relationship from which children can directly result in a different way to others, and this is the basis for marriage laws.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If marriage is solely about love and commitment, inevitable challenge will come for further redefinition. Evidence from around the world shows that once marriage is treated as having a flexible definition, pressure grows for that definition to be changed yet again. Changing the definition of marriage to encompass other types of relationships that are inherently different risks changing the basis of the legal structure designed to protect marriage. We see evidence of this in countries, such as Netherlands, Canada and Mexico, where same sex marriage has been in place longer. The definition of marriage is being challenged to accommodate three person relationships, polygamy and provision for two-year contracts.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If marriage is redefined, we have concerns regarding constraints on Free Speech. With the legalisation of same-sex "marriage" a legal edict is establishing the normative nature of same sex "marriage" and thereby ruling out as discriminatory essential arguments about the complementarity of male and female or the procreative purpose of marriage. The Church will lose its right to speak of heterosexual marriage as the normative and a long-standing truth of nature.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> We believe the State can help give legal protection and support public commitment for same sex relationships but do not believe this is best achieved by redefining the essential nature of marriage. The Isle of Man has the opportunity to provide a legal context and framework, for example through strengthening Civil Partnerships, so that all types of relationship have the same benefits and responsibilities without redefining marriage.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> We are concerned that UK Legislation on this matter was rushed. As Lord Dear (who was not opposed to the principle of same sex marriage) pointed out; <i>"My problem was, and still is, that the government didn't give it enough thought and didn't go through the processes they should have done for something as sensitive and important as this. It was rushed through parliament with indecent haste without a royal commission, an in-depth inquiry, or</i></p>

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	<p><i>any mention in the manifesto. As it is I think we're going to have to put sticking plaster all over it for years to come."</i>ⁱⁱ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The consultation was minimal and did not allow for a debate on the principle of marriage. It was focused on the drafting of legislation unlike in the Republic of Ireland where a wider public discussion of the principle was facilitated. <input type="checkbox"/> Over two-thirds of a million UK citizens signed a national petition opposing the redefinition of marriage. More than 50,000 also signed a petition in Scotland.ⁱⁱⁱ <input type="checkbox"/> The UK Bill has fundamentally changed other aspects of the definition of marriage, such as the basis of faithfulness within marriage. The treatment of adultery has determined that this no longer breaks the covenant of marriage. This has been replicated in the draft Bill. <input type="checkbox"/> The UK legislation is relatively new (2013) and therefore untested. Our belief is that lessons should be taken from the impact of legalisation of same sex marriage in countries where legislation is longer-standing. <input type="checkbox"/> The Isle of Man has not traditionally simply followed the UK on legislative matters, such as the minimum age for voting, and this is another opportunity for independent action to achieve a better result. <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The legislation to protect conscientious objection is not strong enough to avoid future legal challenge under discrimination. In the legislation, individual conscience is not fully protected. If this legislation is introduced, this has fundamentally changed the ability to act on matters of conscience without protection. Already in countries like France and the U.S., there has been prosecution of those acting under conscience. <input type="checkbox"/> Although there is an attempt to protect church institutions from being forced to conduct same sex marriage ceremonies, a church is defined by the individual members. If they are not protected on matters of conscience relating to religious belief due to change outside their control, the protection under this legislation has limited value. <input type="checkbox"/> Reading the Bill it would appear that public officers, such as registrars, are not protected. We believe they should be protected – when they were employed, they did not know that their job would entail dealing with same sex marriage. <input type="checkbox"/> While church ministers are protected and others who fulfil "religious functions" within the church e.g. organists (para 3.13), we are concerned that individuals who fulfil "non-religious functions" (inside or outside the Church) are not protected – e.g. Florists, caterers, bakers, photographers, wedding venues, wedding coordinators. There seems no reason why church ministers should be free not to participate, but individual believers' do not have that right. Rendering a service to the public, should not cancel out the protection of their conscience. Religious freedom is not only a belief privately held, but the right to give outward manifestation to that right in the public sphere. <input type="checkbox"/> Whilst the draft Act exempts places of worship (e.g. church buildings), there is a need for clarification regarding other facilities that belong to the church. <input type="checkbox"/> The introduction of same sex marriage legislation in South Africa has resulted in a legal challenge that the church must accept employees against their conscience or face claims of discrimination.^{iv} <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The consultation itself has a flawed basis as it concerns the draft legislation which is detail implying an agreed outcome. For example the Marriage Act has been amended rather than Civil Partnership legislation. <input type="checkbox"/> We are concerned that a shorter consultation period than the standard 6 weeks has been introduced on the Isle of Man on the premise that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Content of the draft Act is deemed "relatively simple and straightforward" – this reflects a Legal only view of the drafting of legislation not consideration of the wider implications. o The Public commented on the issue of same-sex marriage as part of consultation on the Equality Bill, however the issue was not clearly presented to the public and the draft Bill, which is the basis of the consultation, was not available. <input type="checkbox"/> Proposals were not included in election manifestos and there has been insufficient time for issues to be fully discussed. <input type="checkbox"/> The groups specifically noted as being part of this consultation are disproportionately representative of those supporting same-sex marriage. As a result the shortened consultation period does not allow sufficient time for preparing a full response. <input type="checkbox"/> In addition we note that not all the churches that conduct marriages on the Isle of Man are included in this group as they are not members of CAIM.

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	<p><input type="checkbox"/> We believe the consultation process should allow interested parties in the community to provide full submissions and to put questions to the proposers of the Bill. We would appreciate clarification of the next steps and timeline.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> We agree with the goal of the State legislating to strengthen equality and protection for all, however redefining an institution with a clear and established basis to achieve this is an inequality.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Setting aside the specific issue of marriage, our congregations and their many services and facilities are open without prejudice to people of any sexuality.</p> <p>i The Netherlands was the first country in the world to legalise same-sex marriage in 2001. In 2005 threepeople relationships were given legal recognition through a "cohabitation agreement". See <i>The Brussels Journal</i>, 26 September 2005, http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/301 as at 14 October and Marriage, registered partnership and cohabitation agreements, Government of the Netherlands, see http://www.government.nl/issues/family-law/marriage-registered-partnership-and-cohabitationagreements as at 14 October 2014. In Canada there have been major attempts to legalise polygamy through the courts using the precedent of same-sex marriage, which was introduced there in 2005. See <i>PinkNews.co.uk</i>, 4 February 2009, http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2009/02/04/mormon-accused-of-polygamy-to-use-gay-marriage-as-defence as at 14 October 2014. Mexico City introduced same-sex marriage in 2009, and in 2011 a Bill was proposed allowing a marriage contract for a minimum of two years at the end of which instead of divorce, the marriage could just not be renewed. See <i>The Daily Telegraph</i>, 30 September 2011; <i>BBC News</i>, 29 September 2011</p> <p>ii Quoted on BBC website 26 March 2014 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-26634214</p> <p>iii See http://www.c4m.org.uk and http://www.scotlandformarriage.org as at 6 November 2014</p> <p>iv <i>ECCLESIA de Lange v Methodist Church</i> case in Constitutional Court in SA: In this case, it was accepted that the Methodist Church should not be forced to marry, however they were challenged to accept the marriage (in another church/before the State) and retain the role in leadership.</p>
Peter Denton	<p>Question 1: <i>Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</i></p> <p>I strongly disagree with this as I believe marriage has always been by definition the choice of entering into a life-long commitment between a man and a women normally with a view to raising children within that secure relationship. It is the term that has been used for century's to refer to the God ordained relationship and lifelong commitment between a loving male and female couple. That isn't to say that everyone agrees with marriage or sticks to that commitment and I am aware that others choose to enter into a similar relationship on a single sex basis. However, I don't believe this is to do with equality but instead is changing the meaning of a term by legislation when the meaning of that term has been unambiguous for many years. I believe that men and women are created equal, but also that by our design and biology men and women were created able to enter into that exclusive relationship with one another which we call marriage. That said I understand not everyone agrees with that and I understand that people have a range of feelings and emotions which for some people may or may not be towards those of the opposite sex. However it is a choice for all of us to act or not on those feelings and a choice as to what we wish to label those relationships. I therefore don't see why we need to use a term for something it's not particularly when alternative terms for those relationships already exist.</p> <p>I do believe we should respect others and their views even when we don't agree with them and treat all as equal regardless of if we agree with their lifestyle choices or not (and all of us are far from perfect in whatever we choose). However there is a difference between respect and being open to discuss points of view and the danger that redefinition of a potentially polarising term such as this stifles debate, silences points of view and is used to enforce one view (e.g. sexual orientation being irrelevant to marriage) on all.</p> <p>Question 2: <i>If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</i></p> <p>The Island should always look further than its immediate neighbour in drafting legislation and thinking we should simply follow suit or that the UK is in some way a model in this regard. I understand our closely related legal systems etc. can make it convenient to adopt similar drafted legislation but we always need to consider what is best for the Island and its people and not rush into simply copying UK law.</p> <p>The legislation contains several safeguards for the church in common with the UK which I agree with (although also have concern that they will be eroded in time). However I also believe that, particularly coupled with the equality bill, we have the potential to be on a slippery slope were dissent from the view of homosexual marriage or not wishing to partake or provide services to such ceremonies or support such relationships leads someone in an</p>

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	<p>untenable position or worse subject to criminal action. We are risking returning back to the years of criminalisation – this time against those who, while respecting others, don't wish to support homosexuality instead of those practicing it. In my view neither should be treated as criminals. We should respect all regardless of their views and value them equally however that doesn't mean all have to support those views (e.g. by providing services for a same-sex marriage or providing homestay accommodation for the same). As long as it is done in a respectful way that values the person then we should be able to have those conversations and views in a mature society in a mature way.</p> <p>Question 3: <i>Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</i></p> <p>Again see comments above regarding following the UK.</p> <p>Some additional specifics I note are that the opt-out's provided all appear to refer solely to the person conducting the ceremony. I believe others (either corporate, individual employees or private individuals) providing support and other wedding services should have the same opt-out extended to them and allowed to hold the same belief's as long as they do so respectfully.</p> <p>Similarly a registrar should similarly be able to opt-out if it is a matter of personal belief or conscience. I understand that if the legislation was enacted it needs to be possible for such a wedding to happen, but one or two individuals who hold their own contrary views should not be an issue if they simply pass the applicants over to a colleague to deal with, as long as they do so in a respectful way.</p> <p>Question 4: <i>Do you have any other relevant comments?</i></p> <p>There appears to be a rush to get this through because other countries have done so and the perception that the Isle of Man would be seen as backwards otherwise. It should be noted that many countries don't recognise same sex marriage and even some that have recently ruled on it contain a lot of dissent. In the USA views are very much polarised and the Supreme Court decision is far removed from the view of many on the ground.</p> <p>Re-writing the definition of marriage to include those of same-sex persuasion is not a universally accepted position and we need to be careful not to rush into something just because we think everyone else is. It is more important to think of what is the right thing for the Isle of Man and because we have thought through the implications for all. Yes, we should have a respectful society that treats all as equals, but it should also be a society that doesn't criminalise anyone simply for their beliefs and I believe this more forces a particular viewpoint by legislation than fosters respect.</p>
Randal Frankwick	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above-mentioned proposed bill. I am responding as an individual and not for any specific church or group.</p> <p>My response, in short, is the same as the Church Canon law as quoted in the bill itself as follows: "The Church of England affirms, according to our Lord's teaching, that marriage is in its nature a union permanent and lifelong, for better for worse, till death them do part, of one man with one woman..."</p> <p>Marriage has been defined as the above in the teaching of Jesus and in Western Christian nations since the time of Christ. To change it now is fundamental, and will affect family life deeply and more importantly our relationship with God. We are taking a line in opposition to Him which is a dangerous place to be.</p> <p>For those who do not believe in God, then what meaning does the ceremony of marriage hold over that of a civil partnership ceremony? God Himself is the one who instituted marriage and defined it.</p> <p>If looked at from a Secular point of view - The current Civil Partnership structure gives all of the same civil rights so there is no civil, secular or economic benefit to getting married. The only benefit is religious - It is something that is done before God so it is important to obey as He intended it. This bill is clearly against God's definition and I therefore oppose it most strongly.</p> <p>The above is what I would like to record. Thank you.</p>
Jerusalem Bekele	<p>I would like to voice my opposition regarding introduction of same sex marriage on the island.</p> <p>I am a Christian and marriage is a constitution between a man and a woman. They produce children in this relationship.</p> <p>Allowing Same sex marriage will have far reaching consequences In terms of family, for example what about the children being born in this relationship are they going to be raised by two mothers or two fathers? This will highly likely creat confusion on the part of the innocent children and could result in the children being labelled and discriminated.</p> <p>Does society allow illegal drugs to be legalised, no they don't because it is harmful to people. In same way allowing Sam sex marriage will have a lot of harm in society and trivialise the marriage constitution between a man and a woman,</p>

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Adrian Porter	<p>Thank you for your time.</p> <p>1) Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? I disagree.</p> <p>2) If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? i don't have any comments on other UK legislation as its not an area i have expertise in.</p> <p>3) Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? i don't have any comments on this legislation as its not an area i have expertise in. One thing I will comment on is that the Bill does cover the rights of the church performing weddings to opt out without fear of persecution for their beliefs. But what if a teacher, civil servant, baker are dealing with this issue can then opt out from teaching, or providing a service that goes against their belief that marriage is between a man and a woman? will they be persecuted (prosecuted) for their beliefs does tolerance work both ways?</p> <p>4) Do you have any other relevant comments? It is important to note that disagreeing with a change of the definition of marriage is not an attack on same sex couples but an effort to preserve marriage as an act between one man and a woman. Thats been the clear definition. I believe that the civil partnership legislation is adequate as it recognises the rights of same sex couples and i wonder if adding to this legislation gives a better foundation for same sex relationships rather than take something that already has a clear definition and change it?</p>
Rebecca Halliday	<p>I'm writing with my concerns regarding the proposed bill. My concern lies mostly with this part-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'provide protection under the law for religious organisations and individuals who do not wish to marry same sex couples in a religious ceremony.' <p>I have seen reports in the news of ongoing legal battles in other countries that directly relate to this point. The argument appears to boil down to this - whose rights are more important? The person wishing to be married (and, in these circumstances, usually wanting to dictate where this will happen and who will carry out the ceremony) or the person being asked to facilitate the wedding to their freedom of religious expression?</p> <p>I'm worried that the protection provided will be watered down, or even completely removed, at some later point. I believe that the battle for gay rights is currently drowning the voice of those fighting for religious rights, and that those rights may be deemed less important, or forgotten altogether, as a result. I'd urge you not to obliterate one group's freedoms for the sake of another's in the process of amending this law.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
Mr P Wood	<p>I am submitting my views as an individual – please see my response below.</p> <p><u>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Totally disagree. Marriage should in my opinion continue to receive a special place in society and be recognised and defined as the union of one man and one woman. That is what marriage has been defined as for centuries. Any other relationship should not be declared as a "marriage", although there is clearly a need to protect the legal rights of those people in society who choose a partner of the same sex, as in existing Civil Partnerships. Just don't call it "marriage"! • Although not all men & women who marry go on to have children, the ability to have children – i.e.. procreate - is and should remain part of the definition of marriage. • If we redefine marriage as anything other than one man, one woman, then where does it end? Pressure will doubtless be brought in future to expand the definition again still further, as others then press for legal "rights" to define their relationship as also "marriage". Will Polygamy become acceptable? Additional people in a "marriage", 3 people,4,5? An "anything goes" scenario! Has any thought been given to how society could look given these scenarios and how potentially confused, hurt & mixed up children may become. • "Free Speech" is something that men & women have fought and died for and that we have always enjoyed in this country. I worry that if marriage is redefined, people who have a differing view and choose to express it will leave themselves open to prosecution – in effect we will lose our right to free speech! Where does that end? Surely it is possible to provide legal rights to people who choose a same sex relationship, without having to redefine "marriage"

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	<p><u>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is clearly a very sensitive area but most people will probably be apathetic – and then if the law is passed, complain too late that they wished they'd been fully informed earlier. There should be much greater consultation and debate on the principle of marriage and certainly legal protection for those people of faith to be able to freely & openly express the basis of their faith without fear of prosecution and discrimination. A concern is that UK legislation was rushed and not properly thought through. Laws that are passed in haste are often found to require further laws to prop them up. In other words if you have a bad law to start with you finish up passing more bad laws to support the original one! • As UK legislation was only passed in 2013 it is still relatively new and hasn't been legally challenged/tested <p><u>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm not convinced that the draft bill ensures legal protection for those people who object to same sex marriage from a position of religious belief, allowing them to do so without fear of either prosecution or being accused of discrimination. No church official/minister of religion, or other individual should be legally forced to marry people of the same sex where their conscience won't allow. <p><u>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The names of those organisations and groups who have been invited to respond to this consultation appear to show an imbalance toward those who would favour same sex marriage. • The way things are being worded appears to imply the outcome is already assumed – ie the Marriage Act has been amended rather than Civil Partnership legislation. • Proposals were not included in election manifestos and so I've not had the opportunity to discuss any of this with my "prospective" (at the time) MHK to see how they would vote if /when this issue came to Tynwald. If they had indicated a vote in favour of same sex marriage, they would not have received my vote! • Not enough time given to respond to the consultation document – only 4 weeks instead of the normal 6 weeks
Judith C Newbold John E Newbold	<p>Marriage in a Christian sense and as defined by the Oxford English dictionary is: <i>Condition of man and woman legally united for the purpose of living together and (usually) procreating lawful offspring.</i> The Figurative definition is <i>Intimate union</i>, (the marriage of true minds). Offering 'Marriage' to same sex partners, implicitly undermines and lessens the preciousness of the Christian ceremony between men and women, which same sex partnerships cannot biologically emulate, no matter what argument is put forward. Civil partnership endows same sex partnerships with all the legal safeguards of a civil marriage. Should same sex partners wish to demonstrate their respect and love for one another in a church setting, however, and if a church establishment feels able to permit it, a differently named celebration should be created, i.e. A loving alliance, Intimate union, or similar title. The term 'Marriage' should remain sacred to its initial and ancient meaning, extending its compass to same sex couples undermines the intrinsic spiritual value of this precious sacrament to Christians and others. New ways and strident determination should not be allowed to undermine fundamental truths. Though today not many are church goers, it is up to those who are, to uphold standards, hopefully with compassion and understanding, and if necessary to accommodate change, but not at any cost.</p>
Name withheld as requested (Opposed – 3)	<p>Personally, I think it would be a retrograde step to bring in a law which requires churches to perform marriage ceremonies for same sex couples. Church attendance is low and shrinking so anything which threatens to drive committed Christians away from their church is unlikely to be welcomed by the church authorities or congregations. I have no objection to such couples being able to have a church ceremony to bless their partnership, but it need not be a marriage ceremony which is the joining together of a man and a women. Whether the right to have a church blessing needs to be enshrined in law I doubt it. This having been said, if there were pro same sex marriage churches on the Isle of Man I would have no objection to those conducting marriages ceremonies. My objection, as stated above, is bringing in a law which effectively forces churches to conduct such marriage ceremonies. We do of course need to be mindful of the developments in England, Scotland and Ireland. However, this does not alter my personal views.</p>

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Grace Baptist Church, Peel	<p>Consultation on Draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill</p> <p>We are opposed to the introduction of so-called same-sex marriage to the Isle of Man.</p> <p>We are a Christian Church seeking to uphold the historic Christian faith. We believe that God has revealed Himself to us:-</p> <p>1. By way of General revelation. It is evident from the world around us that there is a Creator God¹ and that to say otherwise is foolish.² From the world around us we notice that men and women are different but complimentary. Biologically both men and women are needed for reproduction and that babies and children are very dependent upon their parents for many years. The marriage of father and mother recognises their long term commitment and responsibility, and so provides stability for the family and society.</p> <p>2 By way of Special revelation. God has spoken to us and given details to us concerning His character and will. We believe the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God³, God manifest in the flesh⁴. He is very clear in His ministry and teaching concerning marriage. His first public miracle was at a wedding feast where He made the water into wine.⁵ He said "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom."⁶ When questioned about marriage He affirmed very clearly that marriage is between one man and one woman.⁷ Indeed in Ephesians⁸ we learn that marriage is a picture of Christ and His love for the Church. Again the emphasis is upon husband and wife "and they two shall be one flesh".</p> <p>It is argued that because there is an 'opt-in' clause for religious groups with regard to Same Sex Marriage, that we should be content. However, scripture is clear that it is our duty to sound a warning. Same sex unions are not marriages in the sight of God. We read that "righteousness exalteth a nation but sin is a reproach unto any people."⁹</p> <p>The Lord Jesus Christ came with the message "Repent and believe the gospel"¹⁰ This is the same message which we seek to bring today. Yes we share the love¹¹ and compassion¹² of God, but this must be done by speaking what God has said and not what people may want to hear.</p> <p>Bible References Referred To</p> <p>1 Romans Chapter 1 verses 19 to 20 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:</p> <p>2 Psalm 14 Verse 1 The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.</p> <p>3 John chapter 3 verse 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.</p> <p>4 1 Timothy chapter 3 verse 16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.</p> <p>5 John Chapter 2 verse 1-11 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.</p> <p>6 John chapter 3 verse 29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.</p> <p>7 Mark Chapter 10 verses 6-8</p>

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	<p>For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.</p> <p>8 Ephesians chapter 5 verses 22-33</p> <p>Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.</p> <p>Bible References Referred To</p> <p>Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.</p> <p>9 Proverbs chapter 14 verse 34</p> <p>Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.</p> <p>10 Mark chapter 1 verse 15</p> <p>And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.</p> <p>11 Romans chapter 5 verse 8</p> <p>But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.</p> <p>12 Mark chapter 6 verse 34</p> <p>And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things</p>
<p>Captain Simon Clampton, Carol-Anne P. Latta MCIPR PR & Communications Manager United Kingdom Territory with The Republic of Ireland The Salvation Army</p>	<p>Please accept this letter as our response to the Consultation on the Draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill.</p> <p>The Salvation Army is firmly convinced that the strengthening and encouragement of the institution of marriage is vitally important to the maintenance of secure family life, and that this, in turn, is crucial to stability in society as a whole.</p> <p>The Salvation Army affirms the New Testament understanding of marriage, that is, the voluntary and loving union for life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, this union being established by an authorised ceremony.</p> <p>We make our belief clear and publicly that marriage is a religious ceremony, a covenant between God and a wife and a husband, as well as a legally binding contract. For those who do not share these beliefs we advocate a legal civil ceremony characterised by mutual loving commitment and shared responsibility within a relationship.</p> <p>We believe that it is wrong to discriminate against anyone in the provision of social and pastoral care because of their presumed or declared identity. As a Christian Church we are firmly against any change to the definition of marriage and believe that neither the State nor the Church has the right to redefine its meaning.</p> <p>These views are based upon our published statements on human sexuality and marriage which can be found on our website.</p>
<p>James Curtis</p>	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>I Disagree. Heterosexual monogamous marriage has been a solid unchanging foundation for societies across the world for thousands of years. I don't see any benefit to our society in redefining this foundation.</p> <p>Legal provision for those who would seek to have same-sex relationships is currently in existence in the form of civil partnerships. The "Statement" on Page 15 of the consultation document acknowledges that "civil partners have broadly the same rights as spouses in a marriage". There is therefore no need to change the definition of marriage out of any sense of "fair play" or "equality" as this legal equality is already in existence in the form of Civil Partnership.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the UK?</p>

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	<p>The UK implemented this legislation under pressure from relatively small but vocal lobby organisations with much haste and no democratic mandate from the electorate.</p> <p>The Isle of Man has historically taken a cautious approach to adopting UK legislation, often allowing several years to pass while we assess the effect of that legislation on the UK before we follow suit. In many cases this has been greatly to our benefit as we have been able to tailor the implementation of our legislation to avoid the teething problems of that implemented by the UK. In some cases we have seen the UK abandon or even reverse legislation due to the unexpected problems it caused during the period we were "evaluating" it. If we are looking at changing foundational legislation that has existed largely unchanged for thousands of years, surely a measured and cautious approach would be wise governance.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document> I hope it will remain just a draft for many years to come while we wisely wait and observe the impact this has on other countries.</p> <p>This legislation has been implemented in the UK and other jurisdictions without due consideration to people's "right to conscience". Looking at countries where this legislation has been in place for longer than the UK the "cracks are already appearing" as business owners and registrars are being dragged through the courts by these same vocal organisations simply for holding an opinion on the definition of marriage that has been universally endorsed for millennia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · If the purpose of this legislation is to force people to conform their personal opinion to a government-prescribed position, then this is undemocratic, restricts freedom of speech and should be thrown out on principle. · If the purpose of this legislation is to allow equality and freedom to all (including freedom of conscience and freedom of speech) then it is flawed, as shown by the law suits being brought against individuals around the world, and should not be implemented. <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? Looking at the phrasing of the questions in this bill, and even the equality@gov.im email address that has been assigned to it, it appears there is an expectation that this will "just go through like it has in the UK". The Isle of Man government has the opportunity here to exercise caution, put this rushed legislation on hold for a few years, and learn from the mistakes of the UK government. This cautious approach would be greatly to the benefit of the Manx people.</p>
Alison Curtis	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? I disagree that same sex couples should be allowed to get married. Civil Partnerships are already allowed on the Island and I do not see that redefining marriage will bring any additional benefits.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? The Island in general has been slow to adopt legislation from the UK. This has been to our benefit, the delay gives us the opportunity to identify any potential pitfalls from any legislation before we introduce them into our society. I would consider that implementing this at this stage would be hasty and unwise.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? I have stated that I disagree with this act in principle, therefore my only comments would be that the marriage act does not require redefinition.</p>
Georgina Graham	<p>I wish to make the following comments to the Consultation Questions.</p> <p>1. I disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married. I believe it is important for the State to help give legal protection and support for same sex relationships but I do not believe that this is best achieved by redefining the nature of marriage.</p> <p>Marriage in the UK up until this point, has always defined the legal joining of one man to one woman under God. It is the religious blessing in marriage which essentially separates it from a civil union. God is a central part of marriage, vows are taken 'in the presence of God' and the Bible would show us that it is God, and not us, who designed marriage. Therefore I do not believe that it is our right to redefine it.</p> <p>True marriage has always been founded on the different, complementary natures of men and women, and part of it's design is for procreation within the stability and balance of a secure male and female family unit.</p> <p>2. I have concerns about the Isle of Man's legislation being based on the UK legislation in that the UK legislation is still in its infancy and therefore</p>

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	<p>untested. I feel it would be wiser to take time to carefully forge our own legislation which learns from other's mistakes and encompasses the wishes of the whole of society rather than just presuming that the UK legislation is a 'one size fits all'.</p> <p>3.Comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill As a service provider to the wedding industry, (with reference to para 3.13) I have concerns that church ministers and others who fulfil religious functions within the church (organists) are protected but those who don't fall under this category (i.e those performing 'non-religious functions' - photographers, musicians, florists etc) do not have the right to decline their services on the basis of their personal belief. There needs to be adequate legal protection for both those supporting the Same Sex Couples Marriage Bill, and for those who wish not to participate.</p> <p>4.Other comments I believe the result of this Consultation carries a significant weight and impact to our Island and feel that there needs to be more time to consider an unbiased viewpoint of the whole of society. There should be no rush to push this Bill through. The Government's goal for Equality and Protection for all is agreeable, however I do not feel that equality is achieved by redefining marriage, which already has a clear and established basis.</p>
Richard Bion	<p>I would like to lodge my opposition to the proposed, Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill and Isle of Man Marriage Act 1983 amendment. The basis of my objection is as per the statements below: I oppose the introduction of same-sex marriage to the Isle of Man on the following grounds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proposed legislation fundamentally misconstrues the purpose of the state's legal recognition of marriage; 2. The proposed Bill is unnecessary and divisive; 3. On the basis of its own standards, the proposed legislation is intellectually incoherent and unfair; 4. The proposed Bill would enshrine homosexual marriage in law as a second-class institution; 5. The existing marriage legislation is already entirely fair and equal; 6. The proposed legislation would further undermine the institution of marriage to the detriment of society; 7. The proposed legislation does not sufficiently protect those who hold sincere philosophical or religious beliefs in opposition to same-sex 'marriage'; 8. Tynwald has no public mandate to enact the proposed Bill; 9. The proposed legislation is a rebellion against God's moral Law, is thus greatly offensive to Almighty God and to many people of faith. <p>I shall now briefly explain each of these points. 1. The proposed legislation fundamentally misconstrues the purpose of the state's legal recognition of marriage Legislation should serve the good of society. The state has historically recognized and privileged particular institutions through its legal and tax systems. It does so because it believes this to result in tangible benefit to society as a whole. Traditional marriage (i.e. the lifelong union of one man and one woman) has long been recognized and privileged because society benefits economically and socially when children are raised in stable families where both father and mother are present throughout the child's upbringing. Whilst it is true that traditional heterosexual marriages do not <i>necessarily</i> entail procreation, the state's compelling interest in privileging traditional marriage is nevertheless to foster stable family environments where each child benefits from the distinct and complementary kinds of loving care offered by both father and mother. It is incontrovertible that the collapse of the traditional family in recent decades has resulted in great harm to our society. It is evident that same-sex unions do not naturally result in children, and that such unions unavoidably deprive any children of the right and benefit of being cared for by both biological parents. Furthermore, recent high-quality research shows that children under the care of same-sex couples are significantly disadvantaged relative to those in the care of heterosexual couples.^{1,2} The state can therefore have no compelling interest in privileging same-sex relationships through its legal system. If legislation should serve the good of society, the state conversely has no reason to legislate in areas that do not accrue benefit to society. Indeed, it <i>should not</i> legislate in such areas. This is because even clearly beneficial laws necessarily infringe upon the freedom and liberties of others. (For example, even a highly desirable law against theft constrains the liberty of the would-be thief to act according to his avarice.) Since individual liberty is of</p>

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	<p>great value, the state – absent a compelling societal benefit – should not attempt to legislate to validate one person’s mere opinion over that of another. It is notably <i>not</i> the task of the state to create law in an attempt to make people <i>feel</i> happy, affirmed, or comfortable with their life choices. The Consultation Document fails to present any benefit to society as a whole from the proposed legislation. It shows no understanding at all of why the state has historically privileged traditional marriage. Indeed, rather than advance a rational argument in support of the Bill, the Chief Minister instead makes in his foreword an emotional appeal to a vague notion of ‘fairness and tolerance’. I shall address this later.</p> <p>The only other basis put forward by the Consultation Document in favour of the proposed legislation is that other jurisdictions have also recently considered the matter. Yet, no matter how many times and in how many different ways this same point is repetitiously advanced by the Document, this bare observation fails to rise to the level of rational argument. Other jurisdictions introduce all sorts of legislation for all sorts of reasons, and yet we do not and should not automatically follow suit unless there is a compelling reason for so doing. Again, the Consultation Document conspicuously fails to enunciate such a reason. I observe too that the Document singularly avoids dealing with the rather obvious counter to its notion that jurisdictional precedent is somehow important – namely, the fact that vastly more jurisdictions presently prohibit so-called homosexual marriage than permit it. No legislation should ever be introduced upon such a paucity of rational argument as that evidenced by the Consultation Document. Far from this proposed Bill, in the words of the Chief Minister, sending ‘a strong message to the world that the Island is a modern and inclusive nation’, it instead proclaims loudly that the Island has abandoned rationality as a basis for its law, and has instead embraced the anarchy of unthinking emotionalism. Such elevation of feeling over rational thought is unworthy of our legislators. Indeed, the proposed Bill embodies exactly the kind of empty, gesture politics that a mature and responsible legislature should eschew no bill should be passed because it makes a small portion of the society feel good and included for a period of time, such period of time will end and then what will be required to make the small sector feel good and included again.</p> <p>2. The proposed Bill is unnecessary and divisive</p> <p>Even if I were to concede some benefit to society in recognizing and privileging same-sex relationships, which I do not, the proposed legislation is utterly unnecessary. The <i>Civil Partnership Act 2011</i> already enables homosexual couples to form a civil partnership, with all the tax and legal benefits attending traditional marriage. The proposed legislation thus in no way advances the actual rights of homosexual couples. Since the Bill is unnecessary, it should be rejected.</p> <p>As the proposed legislation grants no tangible legal or tax benefits to homosexual couples, the only remaining reason for it to be passed is to demand from the rest of society an acceptance of homosexual unions as being morally good relationships equivalent in every way to traditional heterosexual life-long marriage. Yet, as I have already asserted, legislation should not be enacted to make people feel happy and comfortable by coercing affirmation of their life choices from another larger portion of the populace, which will then itself become unhappy and uncomfortable. Rather, legislation should be enacted only when it brings clear benefit to society.</p> <p>Furthermore, as the Chief Minister admits, the proposed Bill is intensely divisive. He is entirely correct when he writes in his foreword: I recognise that the proposed legislation to allow same sex couples to be married may generate strong and polarised views, with some organisations and individuals believing very strongly that marriage can only ever be between a man and a woman.</p> <p>Thus, the only possible reason for enacting the legislation – to gain the approbation of wider society for homosexual unions by labelling them ‘marriage’ – is unachievable on the Chief Minister’s own admission. While consistent, Bible-believing Christians remain on the Island (or, indeed, anyone else with religious or philosophical objections), there will never be complete societal acceptance of so-called homosexual marriage. And, while Tynwald may declare a homosexual union to be ‘marriage’, and even drive-away Christians, the forcing of the bill can never alter the biological fact that men and women are not physically interchangeable. Homosexual relationships can never and will never be equivalent to heterosexual ones, not least because a homosexual couple’s anatomy is fundamentally incompatible, and they are unable to procreate without external assistance.</p> <p>Again, then, the legislation is shown both to be unnecessary <i>and</i> unable to achieve its presumed goal of normalizing homosexual unions. It unwisely seeks to privilege – with no concomitant societal benefit – the opinions and feelings of a very few homosexual activists (albeit some in positions of high power) over the livelihoods of those who hold sincere, rational, reality-based philosophical or religious objections to the very concept of homosexual ‘marriage’. The proposal is thus futile and, because it is extraordinarily divisive, damaging to the cohesion of our small Island community. It should be rejected.</p> <p>3. On the basis of its own standards, the proposed legislation is intellectually incoherent and unfair</p> <p>The stated goal of the proposed Bill is the promotion of some supposed notion of ‘fairness and tolerance’. Yet, considered on the grounds of such</p>

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	<p>emotionalism, the proposed legislation is seen to be distinctly <i>unfair</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It continues to privilege couples over polygamous relationships. (The reason for marriage being between <i>two</i> people is self-evidently that our physical nature requires two people to procreate – a male and a female. Once the requirement for marriage to be between one <i>male</i> and one <i>female</i> is abandoned, as it is with same-sex unions, there remains no principled non-religious reason to prohibit polygamous relationships or other inappropriate relationships.) • It continues to privilege those not in a consanguineous relationship over those who would claim to be in 'loving relationship' with an incestuously close family member. (Once procreation is abandoned as the basis for the legal privileging of marriage, there remains no non-religious argument to proscribe incestuous relationships.) <p>If an emotional appeal to 'fairness and tolerance' is to be the determining principle for our marriage legislation, what then is the rational basis for prohibiting 'loving, committed' polygamous relationships? And why then should a man not marry his sister, nephew, niece, brother – or indeed, even his own father or mother?</p> <p>To be clear, I am strongly against extending marriage legislation to allow for such relationships, and believe that to do so would be detrimental to society. Nevertheless, it is intellectually incoherent to extend marriage to same-sex couples on the grounds of 'fairness and tolerance' for 'loving, committed' relationships (again, to use the Chief Minister's words), but then to deny it to other kinds of professedly 'loving, committed' relationships. It is unfathomable that the Consultation Document fails to make even the slightest attempt to address such glaring logical difficulties with the position it advocates.</p> <p>The proposed legislation should therefore be rejected as being self-defeating in its utter inconsistency with its own stated aims.</p> <p>4. The proposed Bill would enshrine homosexual marriage in law as a second-class institution</p> <p>The Consultation Document clearly intends the proposed legislation to be understood as extending <i>existing</i> traditional marriage privileges to cover homosexual couples. However, schedule 2 part 3 of the proposed Bill borrows from a similar provision in the UK legislation and expressly states: Only conduct between the respondent and a person of the opposite sex can constitute adultery for the purposes of this section. Thus, infidelity with someone of the same sex as one's spouse is considered adultery for heterosexual marriage, that same infidelity is <i>not</i> regarded as adultery for the purposes of homosexual 'marriage'.</p> <p>This provision is bizarre, <i>if</i> the legislation is truly intended to permit 'loving, committed couples of the same sex to be married'. If the legislation is indeed for the benefit of <i>committed</i> homosexual couples, why do those supposedly committed couples need a special definition of adultery that expressly excludes the most likely acts of homosexual infidelity that would demonstrate the <i>absence</i> of such commitment?</p> <p>The Consultation Document curiously fails to explain the rationale for this provision. However, a 2013 <i>Slate</i> article reveals why it is likely thought necessary :3</p> <p>But the thorny part of the gay marriage experiment is sex, and more precisely, monogamous sex. Mundy writes about an old study from the '80s that found that gay couples were extremely likely to have had sex outside their relationship—82 percent did. That was before AIDS and the great matrimony craze in the gay community. She also tells the story of Dan Savage, who started out wanting to be monogamous until he and his partner had kids, and then they loosened up on that in order to make their union last. "Monogamish" is what he calls his new model. But as Mundy asks, can anyone out there imagine a husband proposing that same deal to his pregnant wife?</p> <p>A long Gawker story last week explored this problem in greater detail. In the fight for marriage equality, the gay rights movement has put forth couples that look like straight ones, together forever, loyal, sharing assets. But what no one wants to talk about is that they don't necessarily represent the norm: The Gay Couples Study out of San Francisco State University—which, in following over 500 gay couples over many years is the largest on-going study of its kind—has found that about half of all same-sex couples have sex with someone other than their partner, with their partner knowing.</p> <p>In writing about the subject, gay people emphasize the aspects of their relationships that sound most wholesome and straight-like, Steven Thrasher writes. They neglect to mention that, say, in Thrasher's case, he met his partner for sex only once, and they ended up falling in love. <i>The larger point being that gay couples are very different when it comes to sex, even if this is not the convenient moment to discuss that. And in legalizing gay marriage, we are accepting a form of sanctioned marriage that is not by habit monogamous and that is inventing all kinds of new models of how to accommodate lust and desire in long-term relationships.</i></p>

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	<p>The special adultery provision, then, would enshrine in law a lower expectation of sexual fidelity for homosexual 'marriage' than is expected of heterosexual marriage. The proposed legislation thereby acknowledges the <i>de facto</i> reality that many male homosexual couples do not wish to enter into 'loving, committed' relationships equivalent to heterosexual marriages. What the legislation proposes is thus not the equal of faithful, monogamous heterosexual marriage, but something of a fundamentally different character that is merely <i>called</i> 'marriage'.</p> <p>Again, the proposed legislation is shown to be incoherent and self-defeating. On the one hand, it purports to offer equivalency between homosexual and heterosexual marriage. On the other, it defines a lower standard and expectation of sexual fidelity for so-called homosexual marriage. It would enshrine homosexual 'marriage' as a <i>de jure</i> second-class institution inferior to traditional heterosexual marriage.</p> <p>5. The existing marriage legislation is already entirely fair and equal</p> <p>Given that the proposed legislation continues to disadvantage certain classes of professedly 'loving, committed' relationship (e.g. those that are polygamous or incestuous), it would not therefore enact 'marriage equality' in any meaningful sense, but merely a different form of <i>unequal</i> marriage. The Bill thus implicitly admits that the question of 'fairness and tolerance' (and therefore, of the justice of the legislation) ought not to be determined by legislative restrictions upon <i>whom</i> one can marry (since the proposed legislation continues to leave significant restrictions in place), but rather by <i>which individuals</i> can avail themselves of the institution of marriage.</p> <p>The truth here is that traditional marriage, as embodied in the existing legislation, is already <i>entirely</i> fair and tolerant in the latter respect – every unmarried person, no matter his or her self-identified sexual orientation, is already perfectly at liberty to marry a suitable, willing and single person of the opposite sex. That certain people choose not to avail themselves of the legal opportunity to marry a person of the opposite sex is their right, but in no way does this indicate any deficiency, intolerance or unfairness in the existing marriage legislation.</p> <p>Thus, on the basis of the principle of 'fairness and tolerance' as advanced by the Chief Minister, the Bill is manifestly unnecessary and should therefore be rejected.</p> <p>6. The proposed legislation would further undermine the institution of marriage to the detriment of society</p> <p>In his foreword, the Chief Minister asserts that 'allowing loving, committed couples of the same sex to be married in no way undermines the institution of marriage'. The Chief Minister is wrong.</p> <p>As already discussed, the state's legitimate interest in marriage is the promotion of stable families in which children are nurtured by, as far as is possible, their biological father and mother. Given this right understanding, it is evidently plain that the state's interest is subverted by similarly privileging other relationships that, by their very nature, militate against this desired outcome. (This is even more the case if the stability of those other relationships is undermined by a watered-down definition of adultery.) If those other relationships are supported by the state in the same way as marriage, then people have no incentive to maintain traditional marriages over those other relationships. Thus, traditional marriage itself is necessarily undermined.</p> <p>Furthermore, it is self-evident that the specialness of a thing is dependent upon its particularity: if <i>everything</i> is special, then <i>nothing</i> is. The state's historical privileging of traditional, heterosexual marriage signals that it is an institution of a special character that confers particular benefits upon society. Extending that privilege to other relationships necessarily devalues the specialness of the traditional marriage institution and weakens the strength of the signal sent by the state's support for it. To take this to its logical conclusion, one could hypothetically call every 'loving' human relationship 'marriage'. It is obvious that to do so would radically undermine marriage as an institution. It follows, then, that <i>every</i> step to lessen the particularity of traditional marriage diminishes that institution.</p> <p>I grant that the <i>Civil Partnership Act 2011</i> has already significantly undermined traditional marriage by extending the legal and tax benefits of traditional marriage to other relationships. Yet, this is not an argument for weakening marriage still further by radically redefining it, but rather for repealing the Civil Partnership Act.</p> <p>Finally, even some advocates for same-sex 'marriage' (those rather more candid than our Chief Minister) admit that it <i>will</i> change the marriage institution. Masha Gessen, a journalist and homosexual activist, made the following comments while on a panel at the 2012 Sydney Writers' Festival, Australia:4</p> <p>... it's a no-brainer that [homosexuals] should have the right to marry, but I also think equally that it's a no-brainer that the institution of marriage should not exist. ... fighting for gay marriage generally involves lying about what we are going to do with marriage when we get there — because we lie that the institution of marriage is not going to change, and that is a lie.</p> <p>The institution of marriage is going to change, and it should change. And again, I don't think it should exist. And I don't like taking part in creating fictions</p>

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	<p>about my life. That's sort of not what I had in mind when I came out thirty years ago. I have three kids who have five parents, more or less. And I don't see why they shouldn't have five parents legally. I don't see why we should choose two of those parents and make them a sanctioned couple.</p> <p>Masha Gessen understands that the logic of homosexual 'marriage' ultimately leads to the destruction of the institution of marriage itself, and thus to the normalization of absurd and damaging situations such as those in which her three children 'have five parents, more or less'. If this is where the Chief Minister and his Government <i>intend</i> to take us, they should at least be honest with the electorate they serve about their intentions.</p> <p>The proposed legislation will damage the institution of marriage. It has profound, negative implications for society, some of which will take many years to become fully apparent. It should be rejected.</p> <p>7. The proposed legislation does not sufficiently protect those who hold sincere philosophical or religious beliefs in opposition to same-sex 'marriage'</p> <p>I welcome the fact that some attempt has been made via clause 8 of the proposed Bill to protect those with religious or philosophical objections to same-sex 'marriage'. However, the clause is woefully inadequate for at least the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It does not define what constitutes <i>participation</i> in a marriage ceremony. Is a florist 'participating' in a ceremony by providing flowers? What about the photographer and videographer, or the caterers, or the person who makes the cake? What about a hotelier who is asked to accommodate the newly 'married' couple? All these people may feel bound by conscience not to affirm same-sex 'marriage' in any way through their provision of goods or services. • The opt-out is expressly only for <i>religious</i> ceremonies. However, the aforementioned providers of wedding-related goods and services will no doubt generally wish to supply both religious and civil weddings. Thus, although the Consultation Document claims protection for an 'organist who usually plays at wedding services at a church', no such protection is offered for those participating in civil ceremonies. The Consultation Document paints a misleadingly one-sided and vastly over-optimistic picture of the protections offered by the proposed Bill. • Given that the opt-out is expressly <i>only</i> for religious ceremonies, the proposed legislation would immediately exclude every Bible-believing Christian from any public office or private function relating to civil marriage. Indeed, as the Consultation Document itself states, the Bill 'makes clear that the conduct of a marriage registrar or the Chief Registrar is not included in the protection provided by this section'. The Bill will, if enacted, thus directly discriminate against Christians (and others with strong religious objections to same-sex 'marriage') by rendering them unable to hold these public offices. • The Bill provides no protection whatsoever for those providing goods or services to married couples <i>before</i> or <i>after</i> a 'wedding' has taken place. For example, landlords or hoteliers may wish to provide accommodation only to married couples. Such service providers would have no protection under the proposed legislation if they were to decline to provide service to a 'married' homosexual couple. <p>These concerns are not hypothetical. Even though same-sex marriage legislation is a very new phenomenon, examples already abound of people in various jurisdictions being persecuted by the authorities and suffering material harm due to their being unable in good conscience to provide goods or services relating to homosexual 'marriage' or relationships. For example, consider these reported cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'A federal judge jailed a Kentucky clerk ... for contempt after she repeatedly defied his order to issue marriage licenses to gay and straight couples, imposing his authority in the most high-profile challenge to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling legalizing same-sex marriage. Kim Davis, the Rowan County clerk, had unsuccessfully appealed all the way to the high court to delay an order by the judge that she issue marriage licenses to all qualified couples, gay or heterosexual.'5 • 'Oregon officials announced that Aaron and Melissa Klein, owners of Sweetcakes by Melissa, would be fined \$135,000 for their refusal to bake a cake for a lesbian wedding'.6 • 'A custom cake baker in suburban Denver can't cite his religious convictions in declining to make a wedding cake for two men, a Colorado appeals court ruled today. "Cake artist" Jack Phillips said he gladly serves gays and lesbians in his family business. But, Phillips said, he could not in good conscience design a wedding cake for a same-sex couple when, as a Christian, he believes that marriage is the union of a man and a woman.'7 • Barronelle Stutzman, 'A Christian florist and grandmother who declined to provide flowers for a same-sex wedding because of her Christian belief in traditional marriage has been fined \$1,001 by a Washington court and will be held liable to pay the legal fees incurred by the gay couple,

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	<p>which could “devastate” her financially.⁸</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘A U.K. judge has ruled that a Christian-run bakery discriminated against gay customers when it refused to make a cake featuring the “Sesame Street” characters Bert and Ernie with a pro same-sex marriage slogan. District Judge Isobel Brownlie ruled at Belfast County Court on Tuesday that Ashers Bakery, the defendants, “have unlawfully discriminated against the plaintiff on grounds of sexual discrimination,” The Belfast Telegraph reported.⁹ • ‘The New York State Division of Human Rights (DHR) has ruled that the Roman Catholic owners [Robert and Cynthia Gifford] of an Albany-area farm violated the civil rights of a lesbian couple when they declined to host the couple’s same-sex “marriage” ceremony in 2012.¹⁰ • ‘Peter and Hazelmary Bull, the Christian hoteliers fined for refusing a single room to two homosexual men in September 2008, have lost their appeal to the UK’s Supreme Court, with the court ruling that their company policy was “discriminatory.” Despite the fact that the couple proved that their policy applied equally to any unmarried couples, and not just homosexuals, all five judges ruled the Bulls’ policy to be a case of illegal discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, and dismissed their appeal. Two of the judges said the discrimination was “indirect,” but unjustified.¹¹ <p>The Consultation Document asserts (section 4.1) that ‘it is not considered that the proposals would have any impact on the business or third sectors’. It thereby demonstrates how that document’s authors and the drafters of the Bill have utterly failed to understand how the proposals comprehensively infringe the personal and religious liberties of those engaged in marriage-related businesses.</p> <p>If the proposed Bill is enacted in its present state, the evidence from other jurisdictions is abundantly clear that Christians and others with sincere religious objections to same-sex relationships will be further marginalized and oppressed. The Bill would impose upon many of them deep economic and emotional harm, and force them to choose between their livelihoods and their faith. In the name of ‘tolerance and fairness’, the proposed legislation will thus entrench a deeply unfair <i>intolerance</i> of Christians who wish to live quiet, productive, law-abiding lives in accord with their deeply held religious beliefs. The legislation is exceedingly unjust and discriminatory. It must be rejected.</p> <p>It ought to be self-evident that it is acutely inequitable and incongruent for an allegedly pluralistic and tolerant society to compel individuals to labour to provide goods and services in a manner that violates their consciences. If the proposed legislation is nevertheless enacted, it is thus essential that it is with the addition of a clause expressly guaranteeing the freedom (without the risk of subsequent censure or sanction) of <i>any</i> individual or organization to decline to provide goods or services for <i>any</i> reason or purpose that they believe to be contrary to their religious or philosophical beliefs. It is also essential that there be wording to guarantee the freedom of individuals and organizations to continue to advocate against homosexual ‘marriage’. The draft Equality Bill should likewise be amended to guarantee these vital freedoms.</p> <p>8. Tynwald has no public mandate to enact the proposed Bill</p> <p>The Consultation Document advances no evidence whatsoever of any widespread desire by the people of the Isle of Man for the introduction of same-sex ‘marriage’. This is a measure for which no one on the Island has voted.</p> <p>Though the Consultation Document provides a litany of other jurisdictions that have introduced similar legislation, it fails to note that a great many of these introductions have been by government action or judicial edict, regardless of – and often contrary to – the wishes of the general population. For example, the 2008 democratically passed proposition providing that ‘only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California’ was subsequently overturned by judicial fiat.¹² The recent June 2015 decision of the US Supreme Court in <i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i> – astonishingly cited and mischaracterized by the Consultation Document as a <i>positive</i> precedent – likewise overrode numerous democratically enacted state-level bans on same-sex marriage. As Chief Justice Roberts wrote in his scathing dissent to that decision (our emphasis):¹³</p> <p><i>Stealing this issue from the people will for many cast a cloud over same-sex marriage, making a dramatic social change that much more difficult to accept.</i> The majority’s decision is an act of will, not legal judgment. The right it announces has no basis in the Constitution or this Court’s precedent. The majority expressly disclaims judicial “caution” and omits even a pretense of humility, openly relying on its desire to remake society according to its own “new insight” into the “nature of injustice.” Ante, at 11, 23. <i>As a result, the Court invalidates the marriage laws of more than half the States and orders the transformation of a social institution that has formed the basis of human society for millennia, for the Kalahari Bushmen and the Han Chinese, the Carthaginians and the Aztecs. Just who do we think we are?</i></p> <p>I find it appalling that the authors of the Consultation Document should consider such blatant judicial disregard for the Constitution of the United States</p>

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	<p>and the democratically expressed wishes of its people to be a such a worthy precedent that the Isle of Man should want to emulate. I instead concur with Chief Justice Roberts – it is unwise for matters such as these to be stolen from the people, whether that be by judges or by MHKs.</p> <p>Traditional, heterosexual marriage is, as Chief Justice Roberts writes, ‘a social institution that has formed the basis of human society for millennia’. We thus consider it unwise and harmful to community cohesion to introduce such a profoundly significant, divisive and disruptive measure without the express consent of the people, preferably sought by way of referendum. If, despite having no democratic mandate to do so, Tynwald nevertheless hubristically takes it upon itself to force-through such manifestly incoherent and discriminatory legislation as that proposed, overturning in the process the millennia-old ‘basis of human society’, the consequences for our community are likely to be both grave and irreparable.</p> <p>9. The proposed legislation is a rebellion against God’s moral Law, and is thus greatly offensive to Almighty God and to many people of faith</p> <p>I have hitherto endeavoured to confine myself to arguments rooted in logic and reason that people of all religions – and those of none – should readily comprehend.</p> <p>However, like other sincere, confessional Christians rooted in the historic, orthodox Christian Faith, our worldview is grounded in what that Faith has always considered the authoritative, written Word of the Almighty God, maker of Heaven and Earth – namely, the 66 books of the Christian Bible. Whilst we have no expectation that this worldview will be shared by most of the Island’s legislators, a brief outline of the Christian understanding of marriage may nevertheless help them to understand why Christians regard this particular proposed Bill with such grave alarm.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Christians believe that the one Almighty Triune God in three Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – created the entire universe. As such, we are His creatures and obligated to live our lives in obedience to His will. ii. We believe that God Himself instituted marriage to be between one man and one woman. The Lord Jesus Christ – the second Person of the Triune God, who took on human flesh and became a man – affirms this by quoting from the biblical <i>Genesis</i> account of creation. These words of Jesus are recorded in Matthew 19:4–6:14 <p>And He [Jesus] answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> iii. Since marriage was instituted by God to be between a man and his (female) wife, it follows that the purported institution of so-called same-sex marriage is a fundamental rebellion by man against God His Creator. Such rebellion justly incurs God’s condemnation and wrath. iv. As the Bible teaches that God is good, and that all He commands us is for our own benefit, this rebellion against the clearly expressed will of our Creator God must necessarily be to our own harm and detriment. v. Furthermore, as the Apostle Paul explains in Ephesians 5:23–33, the institution of marriage between a husband and wife is a picture of the relationship of the Lord Jesus Christ to His Church: For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Saviour of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. vi. If every marriage between a woman and a man is a typological picture of the Lord Jesus Christ’s self-sacrificial love and giving of Himself for His Church, it follows that the purported marrying of two people of the same sex is a corruption of that picture. Same-sex ‘marriage’ erases the distinction between the two spouses in the marriage typology, and thus erases the distinction between the Lord Jesus Christ (who is God) and His Church (His creature). It is therefore a direct, idolatrous blasphemy against the person of the Lord Jesus Christ – God in human flesh – and His work of laying down His life to save His own Bride, which is the Church.

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	<p>vii. Not only has God instituted marriage to be between one man and one woman, but He has commanded all humankind to adhere to an abiding moral Law rooted in the very nature and character of God Himself. This moral Law is epitomized by the Ten Commandments, and summarized by the twin injunctions to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves. It is with this love for our neighbours in mind that we beg the Chief Minister, the Cabinet Office, and Tynwald to reject this profoundly objectionable, ill-considered, intellectually incoherent, intolerant, discriminatory, unjust and offensive Bill.</p> <hr/> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peter S. Sprigg, 'Homosexual Parent Study: Summary of Findings', <i>Family Research Council</i>, 23 August 2012, http://www.frc.org/issuebrief/homosexual-parent-study-summary-of-findings. 2. 'Homosexual Parenting: Is It Time For Change?', <i>American College of Pediatricians</i>, March 2013, http://www.acpeds.org/the-college-speaks/position-statements/parenting-issues/homosexual-parenting-is-it-time-for-change. 3. Hanna Rosin, 'The Dirty Little Secret: Most Gay Couples Aren't Monogamous', <i>Slate</i>, 26 June 2013, http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2013/06/26/most_gay_couples_aren_t_monogamous_will_straight_couples_go_monogamish.html. 4. Johanna Dasteel, 'Homosexual activist says gay "marriage" isn't about equality, it's about destroying marriage', <i>LifeSiteNews.com</i>, 1 May 2013, https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/homosexual-activist-says-gay-marriage-isnt-about-equality-its-about-destroy. 5. Arian Campo-Flores, 'Defiant Kentucky Clerk Jailed for Refusing to Issue Same-Sex Marriage Licenses', <i>The Wall Street Journal</i>, 3 September 2015, http://www.wsj.com/articles/defiant-kentucky-clerk-to-appear-in-court-over-refusal-to-issue-same-sex-marriage-licenses-1441295805. 6. Billy Hallowell, 'Baker Has a Message for the Gov't Official Who Just Fined Him \$135,000 for Declining a Gay Wedding Cake: "He's Doing This With the Wrong Christian"', <i>The Blaze</i>, 3 July 2015, http://www.theblaze.com/stories/2015/07/03/christian-baker-has-a-message-for-the-govt-official-who-just-fined-him-135000-for-declining-a-gay-wedding-cake-hes-doing-this-with-the-wrong-christian/. 7. Ken McIntyre, 'Christian Baker Must Make Cakes Celebrating Gay Marriage, Appeals Court Rules', <i>The Daily Signal</i>, 13 August 2015, http://dailysignal.com/2015/08/13/christian-baker-must-make-cakes-celebrating-gay-marriage-appeals-court-rules/. 8. Samuel Smith, 'Christian Grandma-Florist Fined \$1,001, Ordered to Work Gay Weddings but Refuses, Says She Won't Betray Jesus; State Threatens to Take Her Home, Business Away', <i>The Christian Post</i>, 30 March 2015, http://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-grandma-florist-fined-1001-ordered-to-work-gay-weddings-but-refuses-says-she-wont-betray-jesus-state-threatens-to-take-her-home-business-away-136613/. 9. Stoyan Zaimov, 'UK Christian Bakery Found Guilty of "Sexual Discrimination" for Refusing to Bake Gay Marriage "Bert and Ernie" Cake', <i>The Christian Post</i>, 19 May 2015, http://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-uk-bakery-forced-to-pay-fine-for-discrimination-against-gay-people-for-refusing-to-bake-pro-same-sex-marriage-ber-and-ernie-cake-139288/. 10. Kirsten Andersen, 'Catholic couple fined \$13,000 for refusing to host same-sex "wedding" at their farm', <i>LifeSiteNews.com</i>, 20 August 2014, https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/catholic-couple-fined-13000-for-refusing-to-host-same-sex-wedding-at-their. 11. Hilary White, 'Christian B&B owners lose Supreme Court appeal: forced to sell business after gay couple complains', <i>LifeSiteNews.com</i>, 28 November 2013, https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/christian-bb-owners-lose-supreme-court-appeal-forced-to-sell-business-after. 12. Dylan Matthews, 'The Supreme Court ended Proposition 8. Here's what that means.', <i>The Washington Post</i>, 26 June 2013, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/06/26/the-supreme-court-ended-proposition-8-heres-what-that-means/. 13. Chief Justice Roberts, 'OBERGEFELL v. HODGES', <i>Supreme Court of the United States</i>, 26 June 2015, http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/14pdf/14-556_3204.pdf. 14. Scripture quotations are taken from <i>The New King James Version</i> (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982).
Owen Graham	<p>I wish to make the following response to the Consultation Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married. Marriage is fundamentally a Biblical constitution, and has since its origins been defined by the legal joining, under God's blessing, between one man and one woman. I would have concerns about redefining any constitution that has its root in a faith that has been authored, not by man, but by God. (such as Communion, Baptism) I would argue that it is not our right or position to redefine marriage. True marriage has always been founded on the different, complementary natures of men and women, and part of it's design is for procreation within the

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	<p>stability and balance of a secure male and female family unit. I believe it is important for the State to help give legal protection and support for same sex relationships but I do not believe that this is best achieved by redefining the nature of marriage.</p> <p>2. I have concerns about the Isle of Man's legislation being based on the UK legislation in that the UK legislation is still in its infancy and therefore untested. In the Chief Minister's introduction he states that by following this route, we would be a 'modern and inclusive' nation. I appreciate this sentiment, but sometimes 'going with the flow' just to be considered as 'modern' can be a dangerous route. It would be unwise to presume that the UK legislation is a 'one size fits all'. Surely if we truly want the Island to be considered 'modern and inclusive', we need to take the stronger position of forging our own legislation that learns from the mistakes of others and fairly considers the concerns of the whole of society, and this may take time.</p> <p>3. Comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill I refer to para 3.13 where my concern is that church ministers and others who fulfil religious functions within the church (eg organists) are protected but those who don't fall under this category (i.e those performing 'non-religious functions' - photographers, musicians, florists etc) do not have the right to decline their services on the basis of their personal belief. There needs to be adequate legal protection for both those supporting the Same Sex Couples Marriage Bill, and for those who wish not to participate.</p> <p>4. Other comments I believe the result of this Consultation carries a significant weight and fear that the impact on our society has not been fully considered. There should be no rush to push this Bill through. The Government's goal for Equality and Protection for all is agreeable, however I feel that redefining marriage, which already has a clear and established basis, to achieve this goal is actually an inequality.</p>
Rousseau Moss	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? I believe all people are created equal. However I believe that the institution of marriage as God intended refers to the lifelong union of one man and one woman.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? My concern is that we are yet to see the fruit resulting from such UK legislation and would recommend a more measured and cautious approach.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? I am concerned at the lack of protection offered those outside of 'religious' institutions such as photographers, wedding venue owners, wedding planner/coordinators etc. who may wish to opt out of participation in same sex marriages.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? As this may ultimately impact our society as a whole I suggest that it warrants a much more thorough consultation resulting in extensive public participation.</p>
Kathleen C Parsons	<i>Same response as Richard Bion – see above</i>
Graham Smith	<p>I am very thankful to live in an age where tolerance is one of society's norms and discrimination in its various forms is socially unacceptable or even illegal. I am also appalled by what I understand to have been the treatment of homosexuals in earlier generations, and consider such treatment to be morally abhorrent. I am therefore glad that society's attitudes to homosexuality have changed, and that people with same sex leanings are no longer social pariahs or, even worse, criminals.</p> <p>However, I do believe that the pendulum is now swinging too far. I am a strong believer in the institution of marriage, and I am deeply saddened that marriage is under attack from many angles. Marriage is no longer held in the esteem it once was, most couples are not given the encouragement and community support that they should have, and it is therefore not surprising that so many marriages fail. I do not need to spell out the costs of this trend, but society is paying the price for family breakdown.</p> <p>I am not ashamed to say that my views of marriage are shaped by my Christian commitment and the Judaeo-Christian ethic which has underpinned so many of the values in our civilised society. I therefore strongly believe that marriage is meant to be between a lifelong commitment between man and a</p>

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	<p>woman, supported and nurtured by the community and its institutions, (but with of course a compassionate approach where, for whatever reason, this ideal is not met and the marriage breaks down). I am not suggesting that the erosion of marriage is due to changing attitudes to homosexuality, but I do believe that the changes which have already taken place in the UK and are being considered for the IOM represent a further redefinition of marriage which should be resisted.</p> <p>The Chief Minister acknowledges in his foreword that there are many people who, like me, do believe that marriage should be between a man and a woman. However, I take issue with the implication that "fairness and tolerance" inevitably mean that we should redesign marriage. That is a complete non-sequitur. One can be fair and tolerant, without wanting to undo one of the building blocks of society which has served us well for centuries.</p> <p>So in answer to the first question in the consultation, I do not agree that same sex couples should be able to marry.</p> <p>I cannot comment on the other three questions, save for the following. I welcome the fact that the intended legislation provides for opting in and out, but I am concerned that this might not be sufficient. Cases of legal action against people who do not support gay marriage have been well reported, (such as the bakers who did not want to provide a cake for a gay couple's ceremony), but it appears that such cases are sometimes the result of an engineered attack by gay-rights activists. This suggests that some supporters of gay marriage are the ones lacking "fairness and tolerance". I fear for a society in which a commitment to religious values may become the target of intolerance.</p> <p>I am submitting this response in a personal capacity.</p>
Mr A Tickle	<p>I would like to put forth my opposition to the proposed bill by the chief minister to legalise same sex marriage.</p> <p>Firstly I would like to state that I am in no way homophobic - I do not have an irrational fear of homosexual people.</p> <p>I would also like to state that I have homosexual friends and have worked closely with homosexual people for many years and consider it morally wrong to treat them any differently than a heterosexual person.</p> <p>However, as a committed Christian I believe marriage was instituted by God for the benefit of society and the procreation of children. Marriage has always been between a man and a woman and I sincerely believe that this should remain so.</p> <p>Marriage has blessed society throughout the centuries in countless ways, and it is a travesty that a few people are trying to undermine this cornerstone of every society and culture for their own personal gratification.</p> <p>If I were not a Christian I would still be opposed to this bill. The natural order is for a family to consist of a father and mother. As a young person growing up on this island, I benefitted from having the influence of both a male and female figure in my upbringing. My parents believed in traditional marriage, as do I.</p> <p>I know more people would speak out against this ill-conceived bill if there were not this created fear of being labelled "homophobic". But as I pointed out at the start, I am not homophobic – I do not have an irrational fear of homosexual, I just don't believe that it is the way God intended sexual relationships to be conducted.</p> <p>Thank you for taking to time to read my viewpoint. I know it is not the "politically correct" viewpoint, but in a democracy, I am grateful for the opportunity to put forth my opposition to the bill.</p>
June Bion	<i>Same response as Richard Bion – see above</i>
Lianca Bion	<p>I am responding to the consultation on the proposal to allow same sex 'marriage' in the Isle of Man. I <u>oppose</u> this proposal. These are some of the reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed legislation would only further undermine marriage to the detriment of society. • The term 'marriage' already has a meaning: one man and one woman covenanting to be joined together, to the exclusion of all others, until death separates them. To include same sex 'marriage' is to re-define the term. Surely, as time goes, other terms will be used to differentiate between the two. You can't get away from the truth. • The proposed legislation does not sufficiently protect those who hold sincere philosophical or religious beliefs in opposition to same-sex 'marriage'. • Legislation should serve the good of society. I do not believe that this Bill would do so. • Tynwald has no public mandate to enact the proposed Bill.
Mrs P A Wood	Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?

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	<p>I believe that same sex unions should be recognised and protected but disagree with the use of the word 'marriage' in this context. The Oxford Dictionary defines marriage as 'the legally or formally recognized union of a man and a woman as partners in a relationship.' I do not believe that this definition should be amended to include same sex couples as it has in other jurisdictions.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the islands legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom.</p> <p>UK Legislation is recent. It is therefore difficult to comment as to whether this is appropriate legislation for the Isle of Man to follow. There have been concerns in the UK that the legislation is not sufficient to avoid a challenge in the European Courts should a minister of religion refuse to marry a couple of the same sex. This uncertainty is unacceptable.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in the documentation?</p> <p>Measures to support freedom of speech for those who continue to hold and express a belief about traditional marriage should be included. There also needs to be assurances that schools of a religious character, including Church of England and Roman Catholic schools, would have legal clarity about the teaching of marriage according to their the faith.</p> <p>4. Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>The scope of the organisations to which the consultation has been sent appear to be very limited. The wider implications of the bill do not appear to have been thought through. Introduction of the Bill should be delayed until after the general election to allow voters to assess the position of prospective candidates.</p>
<p>Euan MacRae Pastor – Peel Living Hope Community Church</p>	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>I disagree.</p> <p>My personal belief is that marriage is undertaken between a man and a woman. I believe that all people are created equal in value and each person warrants the protection and entitlements afforded to every person under the legal system of the land.</p> <p>I believe it is right that every person is entitled to express his or her sexuality according to preference or orientation and that each person should be afforded the ability to express that loving commitment privately, and publically.</p> <p>That said, I see no need or benefit in redefining "marriage" as it has been understood for many centuries. My own personal belief is that while not the complete expression of marriage, the ability to procreate is a fundamental function of marriage and one of the pillars of a healthy thriving community. I also understand that equality is already achieved through both civil partnerships and marriage and see no need to amend the current situation. I see the redefinition of marriage as a great threat to our freedom of speech and do not support the proposed amendment.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>It seems to me that the legislation was rushed through in the UK with flawed research and imbalanced systems of data collection. I fear that the Isle of Man is set to follow suit and as a result extrapolate data from a very small percentage of the Island population without giving proper time for people to make informed assessments of the proposed legislation.</p> <p>I am concerned by areas of UK legislation where peripheral elements such as the redefinition of adultery and faithfulness have been relaxed, undermining the significance of covenantal promises and trustworthiness expressed in relationships. I would be fearful of similar paths being followed by the IOM government.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>While I notice an effort to protect the enforcement of same sex marriage ceremonies upon churches, I believe that the church is constituted by its individual members, not simply the voice of its leadership. The protection offered for individuals is far too weak. For instance, a church member who is also a registrar could be forced to make employment threatening choices if he or she were not happy to conduct a same sex marriage ceremony. This conflict deeply impacts a person's fundamental right to freedom of speech.</p> <p>The draft seems to focus more towards church leadership than its individual members. I would desire to see religious freedom and freedom of speech reserved for every person on the Isle of Man, not just those in offices or church employment.</p>

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	<p>Many people currently in employment in roles where a change of legislation will threaten job security may feel pressured by the introduction of legislation that did not exist when they undertook their employment. How would the government deal with a conscientious employee who is unable to fulfil the role they once performed with excellence, because of a conflict between their worldview, be it religious or other, that arises under a legislative change that could not have been foreseen when the employment contract was undertaken?</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>If there is a need for legislative change to bring about missing equality, why not redefine Civil Partnerships rather than marriage? Surely it is only sensible to alter the newer legislation rather than the timeless one?</p> <p>As I see the consultation groups considered for opinion in this matter, they appear to be remarkably weighted towards groups currently supporting same sex marriage. That would appear to me to be a misrepresentation of our democracy where every voice should be considered and carry equal weight. There also appear to be churches on the Isle of Man who currently conduct marriage ceremonies who are omitted from this process?</p> <p>I am concerned from what I have noted in other countries that failing to support such legislation becomes divisive and a nurturing ground for hate speech. As I have clearly remarked, all people are equal, deserve and are entitled to equal rights, not supporting this legislation should not be regarded as an immoral, unloving position, but rather simply a desire to see the foundation of marriage protected rather than undermined and disregarded.</p>
K MacRae	<p>1. Do you agree or disagree that same-sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>While I believe that everyone has the right to express their sexuality according to their desires and preferences and same-sex couples in a civil partnership should be treated legally equal to hetero-sexual couple and have the same benefits etc, I do not see that redefining 'marriage' would bring any further benefit. Marriage has for centuries been defined as a covenant between a man and a woman. To redefine marriage based purely on attraction or commitment may open the door to further 'redefinition' as has been seen in Holland and Canada, with 'throuples', polygamy and 2-year contracts being introduced.</p> <p>2. If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>The main concern with the UK legislation is that seems to have been rushed through. The consultation was minimal with little focus on the principle of marriage. The UK Bill has fundamentally changed other aspects of the definition of marriage, such as the basis of faithfulness within marriage. The treatment of adultery has determined that this no longer breaks the covenant of marriage. This has been replicated in the draft Bill.</p> <p>3. Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>I think it is good that churches and ministers will not be forced to officiate at same-sex ceremonies and there is some protection for people to act out of conscience. I would like to see more protection for others involved in weddings e.g. bakers, florists, bands, etc to have the right not to participate in weddings where they would have a conscientious objection.</p> <p>4. Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>I agree with the goal of the State legislating to strengthen equality and protection for all, however redefining an institution with a clear and established basis to achieve this is an inequality. It would seem sensible to redefine 'civil partnerships' rather than marriage.</p> <p>There is also a huge pressure on people who do not agree with the redefinition of marriage being branded as homophobic and actually being subjected to hateful and prejudiced comments and behaviours and assumptions that people who hold this view would be unloving or uncaring towards any member of society. As a committed christian, It is vital to comment that people of any walk of life, sexual orientation, race, or belief system, are very welcome in my home, my business and my church, as I know is the case with the other Christians I know.</p>
M & S Shaw	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>No. In the context of the bible, marriage is decreed by God as between a man and woman. Our belief is that as human beings we do not have any right to change a God made institution.</p> <p>There are also further implications that need to be considered if this bill is brought in such as will Christians be allowed religious freedom or will we be constrained and victimized by the law as evidenced by governments in the USA and Canada ie prosecutions against Christian businesses who refuse to participate in homosexual ceremonies.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's</p>

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	<p>legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? The IOM should not just follow the UK. This is an important matter and so if we do reflect the UK then it appears that we are just copying what everyone else is doing without serious thought of the implications. The UK legislation is only a few years old and there are already faults evident with it. Therefore does it make sense to copy a flawed bill?</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? I wonder with this bill in place would the government allow Christians / Churches to refuse to participate in same sex marriage due to our beliefs without being victimized, forced to or fined? In essence, the Government would take away my religious freedom. We have no issues whatsoever with gay people. God calls us to love all people, however there are biblical principles which we follow as believers and it inherently states that marriage is between man & woman. Civil partnership is available for same sex couples and if more rights are required by the gay community to bring it on a par with marriage in terms of economic reasons then I don't understand why this cannot be the way forward instead?</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? The consultation I believe is heavily favoured to those groups that are pro same sex marriage. This is not a fair way to conduct a consultation. Each church on the IOM should be included in the vote. I wholeheartedly agree with a statement I read that said the two biggest lies in society today are that if you disagree with someone's lifestyle and beliefs you must hate or fear them. Also, that to love someone means to agree with everything they say or do. Both are untrue, you can still have compassion with conviction of your beliefs.</p>
Mr & Mrs C. Staples	<p>Thank you for inviting comments on the proposed amendments to the Isle of Man Marriage Act. We would make the following comments: We support the right of Same Sex couples to equality under the law for their relationship and freedom to celebrate with a public commitment. Achieving this through redefining Marriage which has an ancient and clear religious basis, seems to be an inequality in itself. We would therefore ask the government to consider strengthening existing relationship legislation rather than changing the definition of Marriage. We are concerned that religious freedom, which has been a wonderful aspect of living in the Isle of Man, is not adequately protected for individual conscience within the draft Bill. Evidence from other countries is that those acting under conscience regarding marriage have been accused (and in some cases prosecuted) for discrimination. We would ask that the protection for individuals rather than simply organisations is strengthened. As Christians we believe that individual freedom includes being able to give outward expression to our beliefs alongside tolerance and acceptance of other viewpoints. With regard to copying UK legislation, this seems like a decision based on convenience rather than a considered assessment of effective process or drafting. It would seem preferable to take longer to consider the broader issues and draw from experience of other countries where relevant legislation has had longer to be tested.</p>
Regina Ripamonti	<p>I'm writing to express my views on same sex marriage; an issue being reviewed currently by the Isle of Man government. In brief, I believe that the traditional definition of marriage, that of it being a union between one man and one woman, ought to remain in place. There is nothing to be gained by a change. It is my understanding that persons of all persuasions are currently provided for under Civil Partnerships. Same sex couples are not currently outside the protection of the law. Marriage is a Christian covenant defined by the Bible as between a man and a woman and ought to be protected as such. Let's not rush into legislation because it is in vogue elsewhere in the world. I would suggest a long period of consultation before making any changes to the marriage laws.</p>
Name and part of response withheld as requested (Opposed – 4)	<p>4.1 We do not accept the Government's decision to shorten the consultation process as being in any way reasonable – especially since it coincided with the half-term holiday period. Those of us who live and undertake all aspects of life, including our business affairs, according to our faith, will be deeply impacted by this proposed Act. The statement that "<i>it is not considered that the proposals would have any impact on the business or third sectors</i>" is factually wrong. For example a business in Northern Ireland owned by Christians has recently been sued for not wishing to produce a cake with the message "Support same-sex marriage" on it. We can easily see that were this Act introduced in the Isle of Man, businesses which service Marriages might be forced to support and service same-sex marriages against their conscience, or close down their businesses. The consultation document mentions the introduction of same sex marriage in Scotland but does not mention that the overwhelming majority in Scotland</p>

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	<p>were against its introduction, but got it anyway. If the situation in Scotland is given as an example, it gives rise to intense cynicism about both the process of and any likely outcome of the consultation process if politicians are determined to rush this legislation through in any event. The Isle of Man has far more pressing issues to deal with – many of them have been desperately needed for years - so it is disappointing to note that this contentious matter is being given unreasonable priority.</p> <p>4.2 The current proposals, based on the flawed (and equally rushed) UK Legislation actually introduce more inequality for heterosexual couples who can't have a civil partnership and other couples in non-sexual relationships who have no legal equivalent to either marriage or civil partnerships. A Government that was truly interested in Equality would take the time to properly work through these issues and ensure genuine fairness for all. It seems inevitable, though that IOM Government will nevertheless press firmly onward and bring in same-sex marriage. It is therefore critically important that those who have deeply held convictions supporting the historical and traditional view of Marriage as the lifetime union of one man with one woman, should not be coerced into taking part in such ceremonies. It is simply not reasonable, acceptable or civilised to limit protection from such coercion only to churches or religious groups.</p> <p>In the UK, even David Cameron's highly publicised "Quadruple Legal Protection" for the said churches and religious organisations and the Church of England in particular are already under intense strain and legal acrimony as campaigning groups attack these supposedly bulletproof protections. Evidence from the USA (see the Chief Minister's reference to the USA Supreme Court) is that unelected judges may well overrule the will of elected representatives or the populace, so one can have little confidence that any so-called protections in the drafting will remain for long. We therefore call upon the Council of Ministers to pause and allow proper time to consider this critically important matter fully and deeply – and not to simply adopt flawed "me-too" legislation from the UK.</p>
Paul & Marie Halliday	<p>There are obvious basic differences between the relationships of couples of the opposite and same sex. We believe that there should, therefore, be different options available to each.</p> <p>Marriage as we know it is the formalisation of a relationship between a man and a woman. This traditionally provides the opportunity for the birth of children and the possibility for them to have both a mother and a father.</p> <p>Same sex relationships are fundamentally different.</p> <p>We believe that civil partnerships are a more appropriate method of formalising such relationships and do not see any need to change the current arrangements.</p> <p>We therefore oppose the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill.</p>
Keith and Madina Sharpe	We object to the introduction of same sex marriage on the Isle of Man
J M and M Darnill	We wish to express our opposition to the proposed legislation to allow marriage between same-sex couples in the Isle of Man
Mr W Broad	<p>"Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married"</p> <p>It is obvious the Isle of Man Government think that changing the present law regarding Husband and Wife life long marriage for same sex couples is attainable.</p> <p>The truth is, It is unattainable, unrealistic, total foolishness and cultural suicide.</p> <p>Unreality pervades every area.</p>
Donald G. M. Whittaker	<p>As a Bible believing Christian I am opposed to the marriage of two people of the same sex. I feel strongly that marriage was devised in order, not only to produce children but also to bring them up in a stable and balanced environment.</p> <p>I say this because, no doubt, once same sex couples have established the write to marry, they will demand the right to adopt children. It has been physiologically proven, that children who are brought up with both mother and Father develop better than those with two people of the same sex.</p>
John Taylor	Due to my Christian beliefs I am totally against the proposal of 'same sex' marriage in the I.O.M. This is contrary to the Bible teachings.
Name withheld as requested (Opposed – 5)	[We] strongly disagree with the proposed same sex marriage Bill 2015.
M McMeiken and Z Gomez	<p>Regarding Same Sex Marriage Bill 2015.</p> <p>Just writing to say that we are Christians and strongly disagree with this bill, we believe that God gave marriage for man and woman so that they would come together as one and have children, hence the family unit which we believe is the back bone of society.</p>

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Lord Bishop	<p><u>Response to the consultation from the Lord Bishop</u></p> <p>1. The provisions relating to Civil Partnerships provide all the benefits that same-sex marriage can provide, with one exception, an act of mutual commitment. At my instigation the draft of a Bill to deal with lacuna was prepared by the Attorney General’s Chambers and is appended to this response. My response is, therefore, that same-sex marriage cannot be an equality issue, and that I have initiated a means of strengthening civil partnerships to an equal standing.</p> <p>2. No, as long as the rights of faith-based communities are both honoured and respected.</p> <p>3. Not other than as above.</p> <p>4.a. The proposal in the draft Bill is that the provisions relating to the Church of England, as the Established Church of the Isle of Man, should be identical to the provisions in force in England. This important matter is dealt with in the draft Bill at clause 22.</p> <p>b. The Church of England is part of Churches Alive in Mann and has contributed in relevant areas to the CAiM response.</p> <p>CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES BILL 2015</p> <p>Index</p> <p>Section Page</p> <p>PART 1 – INTRODUCTION 3</p> <p>1 Short title 3</p> <p>2 Commencement 3</p> <p>3 Expiry 3</p> <p>PART 2 – AMENDMENT OF THE CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ACT 20114</p> <p>4 Amendment of the Civil Partnership Act 20114</p> <p>5 Formation of civil partnership — section 3 substituted 4</p> <p>6 Eligibility to contract a civil partnership: section 4 amended 5</p> <p>7 Persons under 18 and consent: section 5 amended 5</p> <p>8 Preliminary procedure: section 6 amended 5</p> <p>9 Where civil partnership may be formed: section 7 substituted 5</p> <p>10 Power to require evidence of name etc: section 10 amended 7</p> <p>11 When civil partnership may be formed: section 18 amended 7</p> <p>12 Housebound persons: section 19 amended 7</p> <p>13 Detained persons: section 20 amended 7</p> <p>14 Notice of proposed civil partnership: section 21 amended 7</p> <p>15 When civil partnership may be formed under judge’s licence: section 27 amended 8</p> <p>16 Grounds on which civil partnership is void: section 47 amended 8</p> <p>17 Grounds on which civil partnership is voidable: section 48 amended 8</p> <p>18 Proof of certain matters not necessary to validity of civil partnership: section 50 amended 8</p> <p>19 Power to validate civil partnership: section 51 amended 8</p> <p>20 Civil partnership agreements unenforceable 8</p> <p>21 Prohibited degrees of relationship: Schedule 1 amended 9</p> <p>22 Civil partnerships of persons under 18: Schedule 2 amended 9</p> <p>23 Civil partnership formed by former spouses one of whom has changed sex: Schedule 3 amended 9</p> <p>24 Civil partnership and immigration control: Schedule 13 amended 10</p> <p>SCHEDULE 11</p> <p>SCHEDULE SUBHEADING 11</p>

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	<p>CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES BILL 2015 A BILL to make fresh provision about the manner by which civil partnerships are formed; and for connected purposes BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Council and Keys in Tynwald assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—</p> <p>PART 1 – INTRODUCTION</p> <p>1 Short title The short title of this Act is the Civil Partnership Ceremonies Act 2015.</p> <p>2 Commencement (1) This Act comes into operation on such day or days as the Council of Ministers may by order appoint. (2) An order under subsection (1) may include such consequential, incidental, saving, transitional or transitory provisions as the Council of Ministers considers necessary or expedient.</p> <p>3 Expiry (1) This Act expires on the later of — (a) the first anniversary of the date on which all its provisions are in operation; and (b) the day following its promulgation. (2) However, the expiry does not affect — (a) the continuing validity of any civil partnership (whenever formed); or (b) the continuing effect of any amendment or repeal made by this Act.</p> <p>PART 2 – AMENDMENT OF THE CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ACT 2011</p> <p>4 Amendment of the Civil Partnership Act 2011 The Civil Partnership Act 2011 is amended as follows. Accordingly, in the following provisions of this Part a reference to a numbered provision is a reference to the provision of that Act which is so numbered.</p> <p>5 Formation of civil partnership — section 3 substituted For section 3 substitute— «3 Formation of civil partnership (1) For the purposes of section 1 two people are to be regarded as becoming civil partners of each other once they each of them has made the declarations required by subsections (2) and (3). (2) Each of the persons contracting the civil partnership shall, in some part of the ceremony and in the presence of the witnesses and the registrar make the following declaration: — “I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I, AB, may not be joined in civil partnership to CD”; and each of them shall say to the other: — “I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, AB, do take you, CD, to be my civil partner”. (3) As an alternative to the declaration set out in subsection (2) the persons who are to become civil partners may make the requisite declaration either — (a) by saying “I declare that I know of no legal reason why I [name] may not be joined in civil partnership to [name]”; or (b) by replying “I am” to the question put to them successively “Are you [name] free lawfully to become the civil partner of [name]?”; and as an alternative to the words of contract set out in subsection (2) the persons to be married may say to each other “I [name] take you [name] to be my civil partner.”. (4) The Chief Registrar may specify Manx Gaelic forms of the declarations and the words of contract in subsections (2) and (3), but if such forms are specified and are used in a civil partnership ceremony they must be used in addition to, and not in substitution for, the forms in English. (5) If one or other of the persons required to make the declarations in subsection (2) or (3) is unable to speak, the registrar may read the declarations in that subsection (and any Manx Gaelic form specified under subsection (4) if the parties forming the civil partnership wish it) on that</p>

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	<p>person's behalf if the registrar obtains from him or her such written or other satisfactory evidence of consent as may be prescribed.</p> <p>(5) After the declarations required under subsections (2) and (3) have been made, the civil partnership register must be signed, in the presence of the civil partners and of each other, by —</p> <p>(a) each of the witnesses, and</p> <p>(b) the registrar.</p> <p>(6) After the witnesses and the registrar have signed the civil partnership register, the registrar must ensure that any other information required by regulations is recorded in the register as soon as practicable.</p> <p>(7) No religious service is to be used at a civil partnership ceremony.</p> <p>(8) In this Act "registrar" means a registrar appointed under section 2 of the Civil Registration Act 1984.</p> <p>6 Eligibility to contract a civil partnership: section 4 amended In section 4(1) for "register as" substitute «become».</p> <p>7 Persons under 18 and consent: section 5 amended In section 5(1) and (4) for "register as" substitute «become».</p> <p>8 Preliminary procedure: section 6 amended (1) Section 6 is amended as follows. (2) In subsection (1) for "register as" substitute "become". (3) Accordingly — (a) the section heading becomes «Preliminary procedures: general»; and (b) the cross-heading preceding the section becomes «Procedure for formation of civil partnership.».</p> <p>9 Where civil partnership may be formed: section 7 substituted For section 7 substitute — «7 Venues for civil partnership ceremonies (1) A civil partnership ceremony may take place — (a) in a registrar's office; (b) in an approved place; (c) in any other place in the Island but only with the consent of the owner of the place; (d) in (or over) the Island or its territorial waters aboard an approved aircraft, vehicle or vessel; or (e) in (or over) the Island or its territorial waters aboard an aircraft, vehicle or vessel which is not approved, but only with the consent of the owner of the aircraft, vehicle or vessel. (2) If a civil partnership ceremony is to take place in accordance with paragraph (b), (c), (d) or (e) of subsection (1), it may only do so with the consent of the Chief Registrar, which must be given or withheld in accordance with guidance under subsection (3). (3) The Clerk of the Rolls must issue guidance about the factors and circumstances which the Chief Registrar is to take into account in determining whether to give consent under subsection (1). (4) Guidance under subsection (3) — (a) must be framed so as to secure that the Chief Registrar's consent is not unreasonably withheld; and (b) must be laid before Tynwald as soon as practicable after it is made. (5) The Chief Registrar must secure that guidance under subsection (3) is available to members of the public. (6) An appeal lies to the High Bailiff against any refusal— (a) to approve a place, aircraft, vehicle or vessel under subsection (1); or (b) to consent to a civil partnership ceremony taking place as mentioned in subsection (2). (7) The High Bailiff's decision on an appeal under subsection (6) is final. (8) The Council of Ministers may by order —</p>

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	<p>(a) amend subsection (1); and (b) make such other amendments to this Act as it considers necessary or expedient in consequence of an amendment made under paragraph (a). (9) In this section — “aircraft” is to be construed in accordance with Part A of Schedule 1 to the Air Navigation (Isle of Man) Order 2007; “approved” means approved by the Chief Registrar in accordance with guidance issued by the Clerk of the Rolls under subsection (3); “vehicle” means any form of land transport, other than an animal (but includes a carriage or similar conveyance drawn by an animal); “vessel” means any description of water craft.</p> <p>10 Power to require evidence of name etc: section 10 amended In section 10(1) for “register as” substitute «become».</p> <p>11 When civil partnership may be formed: section 18 amended (1) Section 18 (period during which registration may take place) is amended as follows. (2) In subsections (1) and (2) for “register as” substitute «become». (3) In subsection (2) for “by signing the civil partnership schedule” substitute «by satisfying the requirements of section 3». (4) For subsection (3) substitute— «(3) If they do not become civil partners by satisfying the requirement of section 3 before the end of the applicable period— (a) the notices of proposed civil partnership are void; and (b) no registrar may officiate at a civil partnership ceremony in reliance on those notices. Paragraph (b) does not prevent the parties giving further notices of proposed civil partnership. (5) In subsection (4) for “registering as” substitute «becoming». (6) The section heading accordingly becomes “When civil partnership ceremony may take place”.</p> <p>12 Housebound persons: section 19 amended In section 19(1) and (3) for “register as” substitute «become».</p> <p>13 Detained persons: section 20 amended In section 20(1), (3) and (4)(B) for “register as” substitute «become».</p> <p>14 Notice of proposed civil partnership: section 21 amended In section 21(1) for “register as civil partners of each other” substitute «become each other’s civil partner».</p> <p>15 When civil partnership may be formed under judge’s licence: section 27 amended (1) Section 27 is amended as follows. (2) In subsection (1) for “register as civil partners by signing it” substitute «become civil partners by making the declarations required under section 6 in a civil partnership ceremony which takes place». (3) In subsection (2)— (a) for “register as civil partners by signing the licence” substitute «become civil partners in a civil partnership ceremony which takes place»; and (b) in paragraph (b) for “at the signing of the licence by them” substitute «at a civil partnership ceremony in reliance on the licence». (4) The heading to the section accordingly becomes «When civil partnership may be formed under judge’s licence».</p> <p>16 Grounds on which civil partnership is void: section 47 amended (1) Section 47 is amended as follows. (2) For “register as” substitute «become» wherever the words occur (3) In paragraph (b)— (a) in subparagraph (iii) for “registration” substitute «civil partnership ceremony occurring»; and (b) in subparagraph (iv) for “of registration” substitute «where the civil partnership ceremony takes place»</p> <p>17 Grounds on which civil partnership is voidable: section 48 amended In section 48(1) for “register as” substitute «become».</p>

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	<p>18 Proof of certain matters not necessary to validity of civil partnership: section 50 amended In section 50(1) for "registered as" substitute «become».</p> <p>19 Power to validate civil partnership: section 51 amended In section 51(1) for "registered as" substitute «become».</p> <p>20 Civil partnership agreements unenforceable In section 71(3)(a) for "register as" substitute «become».</p> <p>21 Prohibited degrees of relationship: Schedule 1 amended (1) Schedule 1 is amended as follows. (2) In paragraph 2(1) (qualified prohibitions by reason of close relationship) in paragraph (a) for "register as" substitute «become». (3) In paragraph 3 for the words following "intend" substitute «become each other's civil partner in a civil partnership ceremony.».</p> <p>22 Civil partnerships of persons under 18: Schedule 2 amended (1) Schedule 2 is amended as follows. (2) In paragraph 1 for "register as" substitute «become». (3) In paragraph 3— (a) in subparagraph (1) for register as" substitute «become»; and (b) in subparagraph (3)(b) for "registering as" substitute «becoming». (4) In paragraph 4— (a) in subparagraph (1)(a) for "register as" substitute «become»; and (b) in subparagraph (2) for "registering as" substitute «becoming». (5) In paragraph 10— (a) in subparagraphs (1)(a) and (4)(a) for "register as" substitute «become»; (b) in subparagraph (5) for "registering as" substitute «becoming». (6) In paragraph 13(1)(a) for "register as" substitute «become».</p> <p>23 Civil partnership formed by former spouses one of whom has changed sex: Schedule 3 amended (1) Schedule 3 is amended as follows. (2) For paragraph 1(b) substitute — «(b) the parties wish to become civil partners of each other in a civil partnership ceremony in the Island without being delayed by the waiting period.». (3) In paragraph 4(3) for the substituted version of section 18 which applies in cases to which the Schedule applies substitute — «18 When civil partnership ceremony can take place (1) The proposed civil partners may become civil partners in a civil partnership ceremony at any time during the applicable period. (2) If the civil partnership ceremony does not take place before the end of the applicable period — (a) the notices of proposed civil partnership are void, and (b) no registrar may officiate at a civil partnership ceremony in reliance on the notices of proposed civil partnership. (3) The applicable period in relation to two people becoming civil partners of each other is the period of one month beginning with — (a) the day on which the notices of proposed civil partnership are given; or (b) if the notices are given on different days, the earlier of those days. (4) In paragraph 5(b) for the words following "(c)" substitute «(which provides for a 3 month period during which the civil partnership ceremony may take place)».</p> <p>24 Civil partnership and immigration control: Schedule 13 amended (1) Schedule 13 is amended as follows. (2) In paragraph 1(1) —</p>

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	<p>(a) in paragraph for "register as" substitute «become»; and (b) in paragraph (c) for the words following "formed" substitute «at a civil partnership ceremony in the Island».</p> <p>SCHEDULE SCHEDULE SUBHEADING</p>
Marion Stevenson	<p>I am writing to you about the proposed change in law on the I.O.M on homosexuals being able to marry each other, I have been on the govt site and would like to respond to the questions set there, as follows</p> <p>Q1. God who made the I.O.M and all else has decreed that male + female should be married so that children can be born in a family unit. Q2. UK legislation comments — if others in the UK (or anywhere else) decide to make their own laws up, contrary to what God has decreed, what is that to the I.O.M, we should be loyal to our sovereign who is God! Q.3 Draft Marriage Bill comments? None Q.4 Relevant comments – Personally my loyalty is to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, so I see no need for a change in the Law as it stands at present. People will find no rest in their lives as a result of changing law, but there is a rest to be found in believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and his Father. Matthew Ch.11 v.28-30 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest....and you shall find rest for your soul.</p>
Tristram C. Llewellyn Jones	<p>Response to the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill Consultation Document by Tristram C. Llewellyn Jones</p> <p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p>1. I have campaigned on a range of civil liberties issues in the Isle of Man and the United Kingdom. A good starting point for assessing a new law or policy is whether or not the happiness of individuals is affected either by the status quo or the proposed change. On the simple face of it, changing the law on marriage to allow men to marry men and women to marry women, if it makes some people happy, should not be problematic. However, the plain facts of the proposals fly in the face of the long established understanding of the institution or marriage. As such, the Bill has adverse consequences for traditional family life. The Bill also fails to deliver the <i>raison d'etre</i> of 'marriage equality' which it seeks to create.</p> <p>DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE</p> <p>2. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) has the following definition of marriage: marriage 1 <i>the legal union of a man and a woman in order to live together and often to have children. 2 an act or ceremony establishing this union.</i></p> <p>3. That means what it says. It cannot, therefore, be used to mean the opposite. i.e. the union of a man and a man in order to live together and have children or the union of a woman and a woman in order to live together and have children.</p> <p>HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUALITY</p> <p>4. The preservation of this legal union is enshrined in the Human Rights Act, both in the UK and the Isle of Man, which says: Article 12 <i>'Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right'</i></p> <p>5. Again, it means what it says. Men and women have the Human Right to marry. It does not mean, and cannot mean, that men have the Human Right to marry men or that women have the Human Right to marry women.</p> <p>6. The Human Rights Courts have already confirmed this position when they ruled that nation states are not required to adopt same-sex marriage laws. In 2006 the UK High Court ruled against two women (Wilkinson and Kitzinger)² who tried to have their Canadian marriage legalised in the UK. The Judge</p>

² Wilkinson v Kitzinger & Ors (2006) EWHC 2022 (Fam) (31 July 2006)

<http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Fam/2006/2022.html>

Abiding single sex relationships are in no way inferior, nor does English law suggest that they are by according them recognition under the name of civil partnership. By passage of the CPA, United Kingdom law has moved to recognise the rights of individuals who wish to make a same sex commitment to one another. Parliament has not called partnerships between persons of the same sex marriage, not because they are considered inferior to the institution of marriage but because, as a matter of objective fact and common understanding, as well as under the present definition of marriage in English law, and by recognition in European jurisprudence, they are indeed different.

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	<p>found that same-sex relationships are accorded '<i>all the rights, responsibilities, benefits and advantages of civil marriage save the name</i>' and found that English law was not 'incompatible with the Convention'.</p> <p>7. So, in plain terms, same sex unions, whilst subject to different ceremonies, are already socially and legally equal. The case for same-sex marriage, therefore, comes down to a matter of political opinion. And here the key issue is one of culture. The term 'marriage', throughout the ages and across the world, has always meant 'between a man and a woman'. As such it is a ceremony with deep cultural significance. Changing the term is unlikely to change the perception of marriage as being properly between men and women.</p> <p>8. The Strasbourg Court also found that (Schalk and Kopf v. Austria)³ there was no Human Right to same-sex marriage. So when, speaking on 3FM, gay rights campaigner Peter Tatchell asserted that same-sex marriage is an issue of 'Human Rights and equality' he was, in fact wrong. There is no human right to same sex marriage. Nor is it an issue of equality.</p> <p>9. This Court went on to explain that when a state passes a same-sex marriage law this '<i>reflected their own vision of the role of marriage in their societies</i>'. This latter comment is important. Same sex marriage is a purely political matter. No jurisdiction is required to enact same sex marriage and cannot be criticised on grounds of either Human Rights or equality for maintaining the status quo of traditional marriage. Equally, opposition to same sex marriage cannot be conflated with prejudice.</p> <p>10. Same-sex unions are rightly equal in the eyes of the law whilst being simply different from married relationships. There is nothing wrong with difference.</p> <p>POLITICS, FACTS AND SOCIAL TRENDS</p> <p>11. The debate on same-sex marriage comes down to a challenge to the long held cultural norm that marriage is a ceremony between men and women.</p> <p>12. The foreword by the Chief Minister makes reference to the popularity of same sex marriage in other jurisdictions commenting that in Ulster '68% of adults were in favour' and in Guernsey 'the majority of the responses instead supported full marriage for same sex couples. ' That's fine but where are the soundings on public opinion in the Isle of Man?</p> <p>13. The lobby for same sex marriage is very strong. But a better clue as to the true popularity of same sex marriage can be gained from the Office for National Statistics (ONS):⁴</p> <p><i>'In December 2005, 1,227 civil partnerships were formed in the first 3 days that same sex couples could do so (21 to 23 December 2005). Civil partnership conversions have almost mirrored that, with 993 conversions taking place in the first 3 days (10 to 12 December 2014). The uptake of marriages, by comparison, is markedly slower, with 98 marriages taking place in the first 3 days (29 to 31 March 2014).</i></p> <p><i>The same is also true when considering the first 3 months. There were 1,450 marriages of same sex couples between 29 March and 30 June 2014 (a 94 day period). This is much lower than the 6,147 civil partnerships formed in the first 94 days from 21 December 2005. A total of 5,078 civil partnerships were converted into a marriage in the first 94 days from 10 December 2014.</i></p> <p><i>The early uptake of marriages of same sex couples is lower than the uptake of civil partnerships, possibly because before the introduction of civil partnerships there was no other option for same sex couples to formalise their relationships. '</i></p> <p>14. Considering that the Isle of Man, in population terms, is approximately 1000 times smaller than the population of England and Wales, we are looking at a handful of same sex couples who might exercise the right to marry.</p> <p>15. In the foreword to the consultation it is also asserted that same sex marriage' ... in no way undermines the institution of marriage.' But marriage is</p>

³ SCHALK AND KOPF v. AUSTRIA (Application no. 30141/04)

<http://icj.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Austria-case-Schalk-Kopf-trial-observation-report-2010.pdf>

"there is no obstacle to recognize same-sex relationships in the context of marriage. There is, however, no explicit requirement that domestic laws should facilitate such marriages."

Neither the principle of equality set forth in the Austrian Federal Constitution nor the European Convention on Human Rights (as evidenced by "men and women" in Article 12) require that the concept of marriage as being geared to the fundamental possibility of parenthood should be extended to relationships of a different kind.

⁴ How have marriages of same sex couples affected the number of civil partnership formations, and how many couples have converted their civil partnership into a marriage?, Office for National Statistics, 21 October 2015.

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/vsob1/marriages-in-england-and-wales-provisional-/for-same-sex-couples--2014/sty-for-same-sex-couples-2014.html>

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	<p>already being undermined with the ONS⁵ reporting that <i>'The cohabiting couple family continues to be the fastest growing family type in the UK in 2015, reaching 3.2 million cohabiting couple families.'</i></p> <p>16. Attached with my submission is evidence from Sociologist Dr Patricia Morgan⁶ given to the House of Commons Public Bill Committee on the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill. This evidence forms part of my submission and I ask that it is considered in toto and responded to in the summary of responses.</p> <p>17. Dr Morgan finds that <i>'Same sex marriage leads to the casualisation of heterosexual unions and separation of marriage and parenthood'</i> arguing that <i>'In the move to same sex marriage, opposite sex relationships have to conform to gay norms, rather than vice versa, since matters pertaining to complementary sexes cannot apply to those of the same sex.'</i> Once established in law 'Experience with same sex partnerships/marriage tends to bear out claims that availability or the 'right' is all and participation more or less irrelevant to sexual minorities'.</p> <p>18. In plain terms, marriage is <u>already</u> declining in popularity. Increasing the annual sum of marriages by a few thousand same sex marriages is going to do little to reverse the decline. To the contrary, the alteration of the traditional definition of marriage is more likely to see people opting for alternatives. The Marriage Foundation commented⁷ that:</p> <p>19. <i>"While our previous report, published yesterday, showed that marriage faces extinction among low earners, today's study shows that the middle classes are fast on course to follow them.</i> <i>When a social-economic group turns away from marriage, we see a corresponding hike in the rates of family breakdown"</i> and <i>"And it is the children who are the main casualties. The single most important factor in a child's development is the stable relationship of the parents and the fact is that long term stability is almost entirely confined to married couples.</i> <i>Only a tiny proportion of parents who do not marry make it, as a couple, to the child's fifteenth birthday. The simple fact is that if you marry today you will probably still be married to the same person on the day you die. If you merely cohabit, by the time your child is 15, you almost certainly will not be living as a couple with them.</i> <i>Over my forty years working in the family courts, I witnessed a massive rise in the number of children being caught up in the system. That increase has come predominantly from the ever greater number of cohabiting couples who split having had children."</i></p> <p>20. It is clear that marriage has become devalued and the effect of that has been devastating for children. It is difficult to see how changing the definition of marriage so that it no longer becomes the unique preserve of <i>'a man and a woman in order to live together and often to have children'</i> will improve matters.</p> <p>AN UNEQUAL BILL</p> <p>21. As to why same sex marriage dilutes traditional marriage it is necessary to examine the detail of the Bill. The OED definition of adultery is: adultery voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a person (married or not) other than his or her spouse.</p> <p>22. Yet the consultation proposes the following regarding: <i>"Examples in relation to adultery, etc"</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A man married to a woman has an affair with another man. His wife cannot cite adultery as a fact for divorce, but can rely on unreasonable behaviour instead.</i> • <i>A man married to another man has an affair with a woman. His husband can cite adultery and that he finds it intolerable to live with his husband as a fact for divorce.</i> • <i>A man married to another man refuses to have sexual intercourse with his husband. His husband cannot apply for annulment of the marriage because of his wilful refusal to consummate. However, after one year of marriage, he may apply for divorce because his husband has behaved in such a way that he</i>

⁵ 4 Families and Households, Office for National Statistics, 5 November 2015
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/lons/rellfamily-demography/families-and-households/2015/index.html>

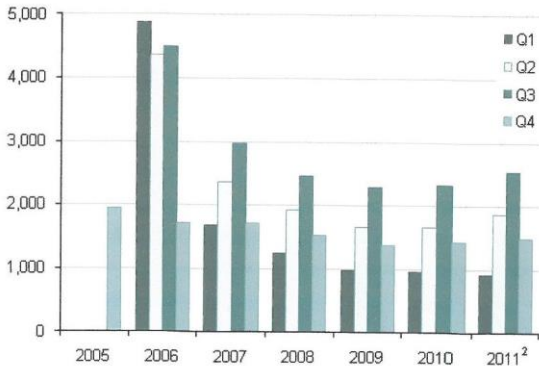
⁶ Memorandum submitted by the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (MB 94), House of Commons Public Bill Committee on the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill 2012-13
<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/201314/marriagesamesexcoupiesbill/committees/houseofcommonspublicbillcommitteonthemarriagesamesexcouplesbill201213.html>

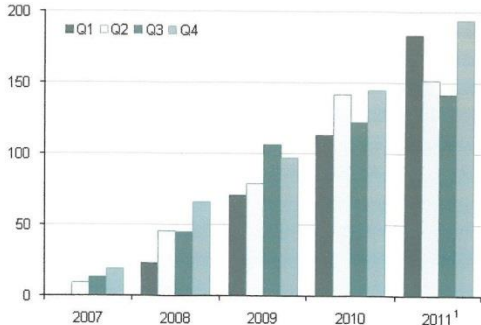
⁷ Marriage rates collapse among middle classes, Marriage Foundation, 22 August 2015
<http://www.marriagefoundation.org.uk/Web/News/News.aspx?news=185&RedirectUrl=%2fWeb%2fdefault.aspx>

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	<p><i>cannot reasonably be expected to live with him.</i></p> <p>23. It cannot be right for a woman to know that she cannot demand a divorce from a husband who has a sexual relationship with a man when she could do so if the respondent was a woman. The breach of trust is the same in all cases and should, therefore, be accorded equal status in the eyes of the law.</p> <p>24. It also cannot be right that, having entered into what is the traditional union of marriage, a man or a woman cannot have that marriage annulled due to non consummation.</p> <p>25. These circumstances are expressed by Clauses 4 and 5 of the Bill:</p> <p>4 Divorce on breakdown of marriage - s. 2 amended</p> <p><i>In section 2 at the end insert-</i></p> <p>«(5) Only conduct between the respondent and a person of the opposite sex can constitute adultery for the purposes of this section.».</p> <p>and</p> <p>5 Grounds on which a marriage is voidable -so 13 amended</p> <p><i>(1) Section 13 is amended as follows.</i></p> <p><i>(2) Renumber the text of the existing provision as subsection (1).</i></p> <p><i>(3) After subsection (1) insert-</i></p> <p>«(2) Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (1) do not apply to the marriage of a same sex couple.».</p> <p>26. As the raison d'etre of the Bill is 'marriage equality' it is quite clear that the actual legal provisions do not treat marriage as being equal for all the parties who it is proposed will enter into it. This is divisive, unfair and unequal.</p> <p>27. The term marriage has a clear and significant meaning which is of deep cultural significance. Changing the law to allow same sex unions to be described as marriages is not going to alter the long held perception of marriage. Opinions on the matter may just become more polarised. Instead of requiring everyone to to be seen as the same, when they are not, we might live more harmoniously if we were encouraged to respect difference.</p> <p>CONCLUSIONS</p> <p>28. My main concern over the Bill is that on the one hand it is simply not proven that it is necessary for the Isle of Man to have a same sex marriage law. A small number of couples will exercise a right to same sex marriage. However, they will not gain more 'rights, responsibilities, benefits and advantages' as a consequence. Conversely, traditional marriage may face further decline with considerable adverse consequences for the upbringing of children. This is particularly so because of the inequity of the proposed exemptions for adultery and consummation which dilute the status of marriage hence decreasing its popularity_ I would, therefore, propose that the Bill is withdrawn.</p> <p>29. As assessment of the adverse impact of same sex marriage on family life was not provided in the consultation; indeed, the word 'family' was not even included. It is requested that this issue is directly responded to in the summary of responses.</p> <p>30. In the event that the the Bill were to be enacted in its present form it would be fundamentally unequal and divisive as a consequence of the inequality. Significant issues relating to non consummation and adultery would have to be resolved in the courts. To avoid this Clauses 4 and 5 would need to be struck out so that adultery and non consummation are treated as being of equal significance in all cases.</p> <p>31. Finally, the provisions on religious matters seem in order. It would, of course, be utterly wrong for the state to impinge, in any way, people's beliefs about marriage.</p> <p>Tristram C. Lewellyn Jones 12th November 2015</p> <p>Memorandum submitted by the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (MB 94)</p> <p>What happens to marriage and families when the law recognises "Same-Sex Marriage"?</p> <p><i>Experience of legalising marriage for same-sex couples in Europe and North America</i></p> <p>Executive Summary</p> <p>The claim that "same-sex marriage"* dilutes or even abolishes the institution of marriage is often countered by the claim that opening up marriage to same-sex couples will actually strengthen the institution. It is claimed that same-sex marriage will thus serve the common good as well as promoting</p>

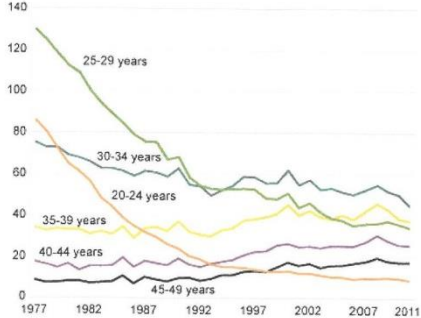
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	<p>equality. This paper examines the evidence for these claims.</p> <p>Patricia Morgan is a leading researcher on family policy and author of numerous books and scholarly papers on marriage and the state. She has researched the effect on marriage when same-sex marriage legislation is introduced. She has produced the following paper for SPUC based on research and data from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, Canada the US, and concludes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · As marriage is redefined to accommodate same-sex couples, this reinforces the idea that marriage is irrelevant to parenthood. · Same sex marriage leads to the casualisation of heterosexual unions and separation of marriage and parenthood. · Spain saw a pronounced acceleration in the decline of marriage following the introduction of same-sex marriage (same-sex marriage was introduced at the same time as the 'express divorce bill'). · Across all countries analysed no causal link has been established to support the idea that same-sex marriage prevents marital decline. · In the move to same-sex marriage, opposite-sex relationships have to conform to gay norms rather than vice-versa. · A publicly professed, legal, partnership does not prevent homosexual couples from breaking up more frequently than married heterosexual couples. · Experience with same-sex partnerships/marriage legislation tends to suggest that <i>availability</i> is all, and participation more or less irrelevant to sexual minorities. · Same-sex marriage may be the end-game of long-running anti-marriage, anti-family policy typified by Sweden. · Same-sex marriage may begin the process of severing marriage from family in otherwise family-friendly societies such as Spain and the Netherlands. · Same-sex marriage triggers dismemberment of family structures in family-friendly societies. <p><i>*Note: We introduce the term "same-sex marriage" with quotation marks because it is not really marriage – but in the text we ask the reader to take the distinction as read.</i></p> <p>What happens to marriage and families when the law recognises "Same-Sex Marriage"?</p> <p>The case for (and against) the rejuvenation argument.</p> <p>1. Part of the argument for 'equal' marriage – especially from conservatives - is how homosexuals are eager to get married and, as they do so, this will increase and strengthen heterosexual marriage.</p> <p>"At a time when many heterosexuals are spurning the idea of marriage, here is a section of society positively lobbying for the right to respect and continue the institution. Perhaps gay marriage will encourage more straight people back on to the marital path." (Douglas Murray, D Gay rites. <i>The Spectator</i> 01.10.2011)</p> <p>Homosexuals will be missionaries to the wider society and make it "stronger" (Home Secretary Teresa May reported: <i>Daily Telegraph</i> 25.05.2012).</p> <p>As homosexuals increase the marriage rate, we are told, this will have a profound effect on social problems, saving us all much tribulation, tears and treasure.</p> <p>"... the most significant driver of social instability and poverty – [is] family breakdown... Backing marriage... would encourage strong and stable families, and tackle the social breakdown that fuels poverty." (Skelton, D and Flint, R ed Gibbs, B What's In A Name? 2012 Policy Exchange Quoting the Centre for Social Justice, p.22)</p> <p>Homosexuals will, we are told, bring back foundational marital virtues in danger of being lost. Same sex marriage promises to be a force for revival which will:</p> <p>"...strengthen – rather than undermine – the institution of marriage and valuable notions of commitment, fidelity and responsibility..." (Skelton, D and Flint, R ed Gibbs, B What's In A Name? 2012 Policy Exchange. p.60)</p> <p>Any claim that giving marital rights to gay couples will:</p> <p>"... undermine heterosexual marriage is based on the consistent misuse and misinterpretation of data". (Lee Badgett, M. V Will Providing Marriage Rights to Same-Sex Couples Undermine Heterosexual Marriage? <i>Sexuality Research & Social Policy</i> 2004 Vol. 1 (3) pgs. 1-10)</p> <p>2. Following on this optimism, suggestions are that marriage rates have remained stable or even grown in countries that have enacted (either or both) 'partnerships' and 'marriage'. Constant rates are not, of course, the same as rising rates.</p> <p>What is available?</p>

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	<p>3. In the Nordic countries civil unions or 'registered partnerships' have been available for the longest time - Denmark from 1989; Norway from 1993 and Sweden from 1995. The UK introduced civil partnerships in 2005.</p> <p>Norway moved to 'gender-neutral' marriage in 2008. Sweden followed in 2009 and imposed its law virtually overnight without consultation. Since marriage, particularly in Sweden, has long had little or no recognition or status, partnership morphed seamlessly into marriage and the two have been treated de facto and, for all intents and purposes, as virtually identical – both before and after the transition. Initially, the exceptions for partnerships were that these did not bestow a right to marry in a state church, adopt children or access reproductive technologies. Afterwards, while there were 'faith' groups no longer "willing and able to continue to act as a state agent in the form of religious ceremonies of confirmation" the Church of Sweden grumbled but complied in this highly conformist society and created a 'gender neutral' liturgy' as they lost independent solemnizing powers. The state is supreme and "once the applicable legal framework has been established, this framework is alone decisive". [1] The country's parliament voted through the new law on same-sex marriage by a large majority, making it mandatory for all churches to conduct gay marriages. Similarly, Churches in Denmark were obliged to carry out same sex weddings in 2012. If individual priests refuse to carry out the ceremony, the local bishop must arrange a replacement for their church.</p> <p>4. The Netherlands first introduced same sex marriage in 2001, followed by Belgium in 2003 - both countries created civil partnerships a few years earlier. The Netherlands was unsure that paternity could be ascribed to a non-generative 'parent', and made it necessary for the partner of a mother to adopt any child they both regarded as their own. Same-sex marriage in Spain and Canada followed in 2005; dispensing with civil unions as a prelude to marriage. France introduced PACS or civil contracts in 1999 which gave limited rights to cohabiting couples, regardless of gender. In 2004, a mayor conducted a same sex marriage ceremony and a court nullified the union, but there is movement towards same sex marriage going on at present.</p> <p>5. Since 1997, when Hawaii became the first state in the US to allow reciprocal-beneficiary registration for same-sex couples, 19 states and the District of Columbia have granted some form of legal recognition to same sex relationships. The variants include marriage, civil unions, domestic partnerships, and reciprocal-beneficiary relationships. Most prominently, there have been civil unions in Vermont (2000), domestic partnerships in California (1999) and marriage in Massachusetts (2004).</p> <p>6. In the move to same sex marriage, opposite sex relationships have to conform to gay norms, rather than vice versa, since matters pertaining to complementary sexes cannot apply to those of the same sex. For example: Spanish birth certificates record 'progenitor A' and 'progenitor B' rather than 'mother' and 'father'. In Canada, the concept of natural parent has been erased from law - for every child and every couple - with court rulings that children could have three parents. Sweden has also moved to eliminate the words 'boy' and 'girl' in return for one neutral word.</p> <p>Have gays rushed to make partnerships or marry?</p> <p>7. Since same-sex marriage has only recently been legalized in a handful of countries, data on how the laws have affected marriage rates – for heterosexuals or homosexuals - is limited.</p> <p>In discussions of same sex marriage, one of the questions rarely asked is 'How interested are 'gay' couples in actually getting married?'</p> <p>8. In the Netherlands, which has had same-sex marriage as a legal option for the longest period (since 2001), 2% - 6% of homosexuals entered marriages in the first five years; much the same as Belgium. [2] One in three Dutch homosexual couples living together had their relationships officially registered by 2010 -with nearly 11,000 married and more than 6,000 in registered partnerships. Survey data suggest that 2.8% and 1.4% of Dutch men and women are gay or lesbian. The population of the Netherlands is just over sixteen and a half million; indicating that the homosexual population is approximately two thirds of a million – a high estimate.</p> <p>There are claims that same sex marriage in the Netherlands is actually declining in popularity: 2,500 gay couples married in 2001- the year it was legalized - dropping to 1,800 in 2002, 1,384 in 2010 and 1,355 in 2011 – with a 52 fold difference with the heterosexual marriage total of 70,217. By 2009, less than 2 per cent of marriages were between same-sex couples. The number registering partnerships varies between 400 and 600 per year.</p> <p>9. Researchers remark how, their "first observation is that the incidence of same-sex marriage in Norway and Sweden is not particularly impressive." [3] For the 1,293 partnerships contracted in Norway in 1993–2001, 196,000 heterosexual marriages were entered; indicating a ratio of around 7 new same-sex unions to every 1,000 marriages. In almost 20% of Norwegian registered partnership over the 1990s, one partner had been previously married and in least 16% of the cases, one was also a parent, although not very likely to be living with their children. [4] In Sweden, there were 1,526 partnerships entered during 1995–2002 compared to 280,000 heterosexual marriages - a ratio of 5 to 1,000. It is suggested that one to five per cent of the homosexual population contract a civil partnership or marry, with trend data indicating that - as elsewhere - numbers tend to decrease after an initial burst</p>

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	<p>(reflecting pent up demand). In the years 1990-1998 – a cumulative total of 2168 partnerships were registered in Denmark , encompassing 1.7% of the homosexual population. [5]</p> <p>10. In the UK , approximately 53,417 civil partnerships have been formed since December 2005. Numbers fell from 16,106 in 2006 to 8728 in 2007 to 6281 in 2009, with a rise to 6795 in 2011 - when less than one person per 1,000 unmarried adults aged 16 and over entered into a civil partnership in England and Wales.</p> <p>No. of civil partnerships in UK by quarter of occurrence 2005-2011</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>No. of civil partnerships in UK by quarter of occurrence 2005-2011</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Q1</th> <th>Q2</th> <th>Q3</th> <th>Q4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2005</td> <td>0</td> <td>1,900</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2006</td> <td>4,800</td> <td>4,500</td> <td>1,700</td> <td>1,600</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2007</td> <td>1,600</td> <td>2,300</td> <td>2,900</td> <td>1,700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2008</td> <td>1,200</td> <td>1,900</td> <td>2,400</td> <td>1,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>900</td> <td>1,600</td> <td>2,200</td> <td>1,300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>900</td> <td>1,600</td> <td>2,200</td> <td>1,300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011²</td> <td>800</td> <td>1,800</td> <td>2,400</td> <td>1,400</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Source: Office for National Statistics</p> <p>11. The most recent U.S. Census data reveal that, in the last 15 years, 150,000 same-sex couples have taken advantage of official unions - equivalent to around one in five of the self-identified same-sex couples in the United States. This number is not just low because only a few states have allowed full 'marriage'. In the first four years when same sex marriage has been an option in Massachusetts, there was an average of only about 3,000 per year - including many who came from out of state. Overall, same sex households have increased in the US - from 358,000 same-sex (married or unmarried) partner households in 2000 to 646,000 plus in the 2010 census (roughly 131,729 married couple and 514,735 same-sex unmarried partner households). They accounted for 0.6 per cent or less than one per cent of all households in the US. [6]</p> <p>12. The period in which same-sex marriage has been available in Canada varies from province to province – all maintain their own statistics – with national legislation taking effect in July 2005. Depending on the province, it seems that between 0.15% and 14% of Canadian homosexuals have entered marriages. As elsewhere, the rate trails off over time.</p> <p>13. Experience with same sex partnerships/marriage tends to bear out claims that availability or the 'right' is all and participation more or less irrelevant to sexual minorities. There is little or no difference in take-up between 'marriage' and registered partnerships. In places that have one or both and significant numbers of homosexuals, there has been no groundswell. From the beginning, the debate over marriage has not necessarily hinged on its popularity among the eligible, with advocates of same sex unions insisting that "equality" was not a numerical proposition. It is the mere existence of a right to marry which is important, irrespective of whether anyone partakes of it or not. This has tended to be ignored by naïve heterosexual supporters, who believe they are speaking for reticent homosexuals desperate to share in a heterosexual privilege.</p> <p>Splitting Up.</p> <p>14. When same sex couples do get married, they are more likely than their heterosexual equivalents to change their minds later. A publicly professed, legal partnership does not prevent homosexual couples from breaking up more frequently than married heterosexual couples. [7]</p> <p>We might have predicted low separation rates with the advent of same sex unions, as only the most eager and committed would be the first to move in together – but this is not so. [8]</p>	Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2005	0	1,900	0	0	2006	4,800	4,500	1,700	1,600	2007	1,600	2,300	2,900	1,700	2008	1,200	1,900	2,400	1,500	2009	900	1,600	2,200	1,300	2010	900	1,600	2,200	1,300	2011 ²	800	1,800	2,400	1,400
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	<p>15. Longitudinal Swedish and Norwegian data on 2,819 homosexual and 222,000 opposite-sex marriages included information on characteristics such as age, geographic background, as well as experience of previous opposite-sex marriage, parenthood and education. Breakdown rates in Norway revealed that same-sex male couples were 1.5 times more likely (and same sex female couples were 2.67 more likely) to break up compared to heterosexual unions: within five years 20% of male and 30% of female same sex unions were terminated, compared to 13% for heterosexuals. Similarly in Sweden , male unions are 50% more likely to end in divorce than heterosexual marriages and the risk for female partnerships is nearly double that for men. Comparison with childless unions leaves this unchanged as do controls for various demographic and socioeconomic differences. [9] The instability of same sex unions has been labelled 'dynamism' to indicate superiority to the 'inertia' of marital stability - a dynamism attributed to the lack of 'clear power structures' which supposedly oppress opposite sex relationships.</p> <p>16. In the Netherlands, there have been 1,078 same sex 'divorces' up to 2010 - two thirds were by females and a similar pattern is present elsewhere, as in Massachusetts and Sweden . [10] This follows the heterosexual pattern, where more females than males instigate divorce. Previously, a study compared same-sex cohabiters, different sex cohabiters and different sex married couples in the Netherlands between 1989 and 1999 (after which same sex partners could move into same sex marriages). The dissolution rate for same-sex cohabitation was 12 times higher than the rate for different-sex marriage and three times higher than the rate for opposite sex cohabitation. [11] The breakdown rates here were higher for male unions. Dissolutions appear to be increasing for UK civil partnerships, with a 28.7% rise between 2010 and 2011. Again, female dissolutions are double those of male.</p> <p>No. of civil partnership dissolutions in the UK, by quarter of occurrence, 2007–2011</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>No. of civil partnership dissolutions in the UK, by quarter of occurrence, 2007–2011</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Q1</th> <th>Q2</th> <th>Q3</th> <th>Q4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2007</td> <td>10</td> <td>15</td> <td>20</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2008</td> <td>25</td> <td>45</td> <td>65</td> <td>85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>70</td> <td>90</td> <td>110</td> <td>130</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>110</td> <td>140</td> <td>170</td> <td>190</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011¹</td> <td>180</td> <td>150</td> <td>140</td> <td>190</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Source: Office for National Statistics</p> <p>17. A Vermont study compared same sex partners in civil unions, those outside unions and heterosexually married siblings. It was hypothesized that lesbian and gay male couples in civil unions would be more similar in monogamy to married heterosexual couples than to same-sex couples not in civil unions. [12] Non-monogamy was reported by over one-half of homosexual men in both types of couples (compared with 15.2% of married heterosexual men). A half of the homosexual men in civil unions and one-third of those not in civil unions had an agreement that sex outside their relationship was permissible, compared with 5% or fewer lesbian and heterosexual couples. This did not prevent homosexual men having extra-relational sex regardless. With or without such an agreement there is no sign that considerable conflict has been avoided by such arrangements.</p> <p>18. There are a couple of features of Scandinavian unions that warrant mention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. High death rates - seen in the early years of same sex unions in Denmark, [13] plus the way that partners have also been, on average, considerably older than corresponding opposite-sex spouses in Norwegian and Swedish data. [14] This suggests that matters of inheritance as much or more than home building may be uppermost. ii. High rates of non-national partners , suggesting that many same sex unions serve immigration purposes - particularly for male partnerships. Sweden is considered one of the most globalised countries. In the last few decades, the potential marriage market has increased dramatically, with increasing numbers of migrants living in Sweden, along with Swedes who travel, work or study abroad, and the rise of internet usage. [15] 	Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2007	10	15	20	25	2008	25	45	65	85	2009	70	90	110	130	2010	110	140	170	190	2011 ¹	180	150	140	190
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	<p>19. In Norway, 43% of male partnerships included a non-Norwegian citizen and 45% in Sweden. It is part of a wider process, where about three out of 10 Norwegian marriages involve one or two persons with immigrant backgrounds. A total of 13.5% of Norwegian marriages in mid-decade were between a man without and a woman with an immigrant background, and 7% between a woman without and a man with an immigrant background. [16] The probability of marrying spouses from outside the European Union has doubled for native Swedish women and quadrupled for men in less than 20 years and many will not have met in Sweden.</p> <p>Even these figures fall far short of figures for same sex unions and it is significant that those with one foreign partner are particularly likely to dissolve - with nearly a half rapidly folding up. This suggests unions of convenience made (or bought and sold?) for resident rights and citizenship. This does not appear to be considered in the UK , but it is a possibility - particularly given the low number of homosexuals at all interested in unions for themselves.</p> <p>What has happened to heterosexual marriage rates where gays marry? Some background considerations:</p> <p>20. Declining marriage rates, paralleled by increasing rates of unmarried cohabitation and births are generally seen as parts of a second demographic transition in the Western world, where marriage and family have been weakened as the primary child rearing environment.</p> <p>21. The Nordic countries are leaders here. Moral and cultural controls have largely disappeared and religious influence has faded. Not far behind are France, Belgium, Great Britain, and Germany, along with the U.S and Canada. With tighter family patterns and lower rates of cohabitation, family dissolution, and out-of-wedlock births are the southern European countries of Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Greece. There is a general drift towards the Nordic pattern, promoted not only by secularisation, increasing sexualisation and easy marital dissolution but also, significantly, by welfare states. Privileges once reserved for marriage are given to individuals regardless of relationships or family arrangements. Male provision for families is frowned upon and mothers are expected to be employed and self-sufficient, with wage subsidies and children in day care. Spousal benefits or exemptions do not exist, income tax is individual and state support is targeted to lone parents with the stand alone mother the locus of family 'diversity'.</p> <p>22. The disintegrative process is somewhat held in check by tendencies for parents to marry after a couple of births; pointing to the persistence of residual norms and family pressures connecting child rearing to spousal commitment. As out-of-wedlock childbearing pushes beyond 50% a stalling process is evident as it enters the toughest area of cultural resistance. Once that marker disappears and the tendency to marry at the second birth dissipates, the path opens to the terminus of marriage which, if it survives at all, rests only upon residual sentiment. While mass cohabitation is not initially a long-term form of living together, but rather a prelude to marriage or separation, it then becomes extended and a substitute for marriage. People conform to suggestion and example and, as married parenthood becomes a minority phenomenon, it loses the critical mass needed to be a socially normative force.</p> <p>23. When same sex partnerships - readily absorbed to marriage - made their appearance in Scandinavian countries, marriage had been more or less dismantled in all but name. Sweden 's anti-marriage policy has been implemented earlier than those in Norway and Denmark as well as being more explicit and coordinated than in the UK , where there has been considerable prevarication and subterfuge. [17] Sweden's politicians' and planners' 'ideology of neutrality' (sic) amounted to about the most concerted attempt in history to engineer a liberated sexuality free from moral and social norms, freedom of women from child care responsibilities and the demise of interdependence through economic manipulation, social pressures and massive public re-education. With radical feminist and socialist ideology dominant from an early period, powerful social scientists have seen marriage as a barrier to full equality between the sexes. Re-defined as "a form of voluntary cohabitation between independent persons" [18] anything which might benefit it over cohabitation was stripped away as couples living together acquired much the same rights as married people. Divorce was made available on request without giving reason(s). There could not be a 'right to choose', since people were deemed 'culturally conditioned' into an impoverishing mould. The withdrawal of support for two parent families, imposition of penalties on non-working 'partners' and very high taxation made it impossible to live on one wage. The word 'custodian' has designated the person closest to a child, who serves the state as the supervisor and agency on whose behalf parents act. Norway and Denmark experienced similar moves away from the largely self-financing two parent family towards employed mothers and public child care supported by social security.</p> <p>24. Removing any incentives to get and stay married have had direct and unsurprising effects on marriage. Sweden's rates were falling dramatically by the end of the 1960s (it registered the lowest rate in recorded history in 1997), accompanied by rising cohabitation, unwed births and high levels of single person households. [19] By the 1980s, boast was that Sweden was "moving faster than most other advanced industrialised counties toward a society of</p>

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	<p>cohabiting individuals, temporary families, and single individuals with and without children." [20] Unwed births were at 48.2% in 1991 and hit the 55% mark in the next decade. With marriage neither legally nor normatively a precondition for a family this has become simply a matter of the fact of parenthood.</p> <p>25. If Sweden and Norway are the kind of places where we are expected to find that same sex unions have rescued marriage after heterosexuals have trashed it, then marriage has hardly been welcome in recent Scandinavian history – or not by governments. Hardly promising, is it? Notwithstanding, oscillations in Scandinavian marriage rates post 1990 have led to claims that same sex partnership/marriage has helped to revitalise the institution. And, the argument goes, if societies with such low marriage rates can see a boost from same sex marriage, why not elsewhere?</p> <p>26. For example: this has been forcefully put – mainly in reference to Norway - by US 'gay' advocates William N. Eskridge and Darren R. Spedale . [21] They accept the data showing a close correlation between legal and economic changes and lower marriage rates, high divorce rates and unwed births. Throughout the 1980s, Norwegian marital households with children plummeted; falling 18% from 1989 to 1993 as cohabiting with children rose 70%. So, would we not expect same sex partnerships and marriage to cause an acceleration - whether temporarily or long term - in changes that have been going on since the 1970s? But they argue that we do not see a further plunge. Instead, while there is still a continuous rise in cohabitation with children and a decline in marriage both absolutely and comparatively in the 1990s, same sex unions were "no stake through the heart of marriage." Instead, they were responsible for how "the trend slowed down a little bit after 1993." [22]</p> <p>Norwegian tabloids and media suggest that marriage was made 'fashionable' among young people due to royal rather than 'gay' weddings.</p> <p>27. Both perspectives are described by demographers as 'misguided'. [23] Marriage statistics in societies with very low rates present problems for analysis. Marriage rates are fairly volatile anyway; affected by economic conditions and predictions as well as one off events. Small rises in the number of Norwegian marriages over recent years appear to result from increasing numbers of people of marriageable age (including immigrants), along with catching-up by people who marry later in life (often with children born out of wedlock), and increasing numbers of divorcees available for remarriage (not a rise in their frequency of marriage). People marry late and divorce frequently, and they increasingly cohabit for long periods instead of marrying. Among those in their 20s, marriage rates have not changed much – in fact, these are still falling heavily up to the mid-30s. Even after that age, recent years have seen a further tip downwards for older age groups.</p> <p><small>MARRIAGE RATES FOR FIRST TIME MARRIED MALES IN SELECTED AGE GROUPS, MARRIAGES BETWEEN DIFFERENT SEX, 1961–2011</small></p>  <p>At the same time, divorce has generally remained high. While the period 1995 to 1999 saw divorce rates stabilise in Norway, by 2000-2001 the projections were back at 1994-levels.</p>

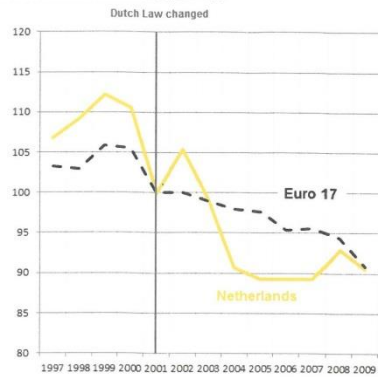
Respondent	Comments
	<div> </div> <p>Slightly more marriages and lulls in rising divorce levels in countries with generally low marriage rates do not mean that two parent married families have undergone a revival. All has more to with the institution's overall decline than any renaissance. Why not look at Sweden's divorce rates? There has been no pause there - so not saved by same sex unions.</p> <div> </div> <p>28. Between 1990 and 2000, Norway's out-of-wedlock birthrate rose from 39% to 50% as, tail gunning Swedish rates, the tendency to marry with the second child weakened in both. Denmark saw a levelling off during the 1990s at around 45% - which seems to relate to a slight increase in fertility among older couples, who marry after multiple births as, at the same time, there was a 25% increase in cohabitation and unmarried parenthood among mainly younger couples. About 60% of first born children in Denmark now have unmarried parents.</p> <p>29. Family dissolution rates differ from divorce rates when so many people rear children outside of marriage. We need to know the rate at which parents (married or not) split up and suggestions are that throughout Scandinavia and Europe cohabiting couples with children break up at three times the rate of married parents. Rising rates of cohabitation and out-of-wedlock births are true proxies for rising rates of family dissolution.</p> <p>30. Finally : a case has also been made for Belgium having a slightly upward marriage trend. Like Scandinavian experience, this is difficult to reconcile with the marriage rate per thousand population dropping from 6.5 in 1990 to 4.4 in 2000 and 4.0 in 2009. [24] Again, the waters are muddied somewhat by immigration, where entrants from the Muslim world will have a higher marriage rate than the resident population.</p> <p>Belgium 's divorce rate is amongst the highest in the European Union. The crude divorce rate per 1,000 inhabitants stood at 47.0 in 2010, the same as Denmark 's. Higher levels are recorded for Sweden at 54.1 and Norway at 54.8. (Otherwise, there is Bulgaria at 54.1: Estonia at 59.1 and Slovenia at 55). Belgium 's unwed birth rate rivals the UK 's at 45.7% in 2009. This is a swifter rise than in the UK or from 4.1% in 1980 and 11.6% in 1990, compared with the UK 's 11.5% in 1980, 27.9% in 1990 and 46.3% in 2009. [25] Children living with two parents at 14 are 65% in Belgium compared with the UK at 68.9% - a Western world low (apart from Latvia).</p> <p>31. In Sum: from what we know about demographic trends, it is preposterous to argue that people suddenly somehow embrace marriage and slow or</p>

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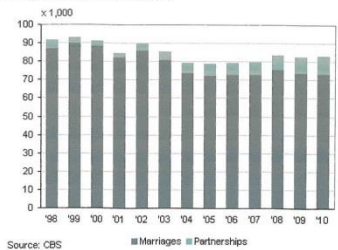
reverse its decline because homosexuals can have it. Exponents cherry pick their statistics. They also fail to suggest how this could possibly be so and how it is supposed to operate. Why grasp same sex marriage as the reason for the slowing of disintegrative trends, if that is what is even going on in the first place, rather than a plethora of other explanations? As already mentioned; explanations in societies with low formal union rates are bound to be more complex than simplistic mono-causal hunches. It has also been mentioned how the third phase of marital decline tends to stall around the 50% unwed birthrate level due to residual attachment to traditional forms in sections of society more resistant to the de-institutionalisation of cohabitation and procreation.

32. **As we move to more traditionally family centred societies** the picture is bleak. In the **Netherlands**, marriage even had a bit of a mini-renaissance in the late 80's and early 90's then, between 1993-4 and 2009, the trend is downhill. A slight upward move in 2002 may be partly accounted for by same sex unions – partnerships and marriages. Otherwise, marriage is declining among heterosexuals, with higher rates of divorce and out of wedlock childbearing. Dropping quite steeply from 88,000 plus in 2000, marriage is at its lowest since WWII (with 70,000 plus in 2010). There is an increase in registered partnerships – which offer a lighter relationship for heterosexuals. Nearly one in three women who enter into a registered partnership are over 40 years old, compared to more than one in five women who get married. If this suggests a remaining connection between marriage and family building, so might the way in which nine in ten couples plan to live together before marrying and two-thirds of cohabiting couples aspire to marry some time. [26]

MARRIAGES INDEX: NETHERLANDS AND EURO AREA: 1997-2009



MARRIAGES AND REGISTERED PARTNERSHIPS: NETHERLANDS



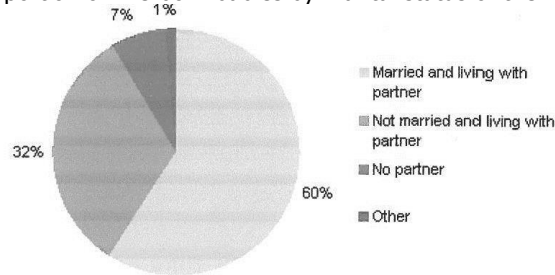
33. From 2001, the formal divorce rate in the Netherlands dropped. However, from 2001 – the same year as same sex marriage - couples could convert their marriages to registered partnerships, which could be annulled without a court order. Using this process of 'flash divorce', some 30,000 couples separated in this way up to 2009; almost completely compensating for the decrease in formal divorces. At the same time, rights of married couples and registered partners were extended to unregistered cohabiters. Four in ten babies are now born to unwed mothers – although if the mother has a

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subsequent child she is likely to marry. The rise has been particularly rapid, from 24.9% in 2000 to 43.3 % in 2009, compared with 11.4 in 1990 and only 4.1 in 1980. (UK comparisons: 46.3% in 2009, up from 27.9% in 1990 and 11.5% in 1980.) In the decade ending in 2009, the share of unmarried parents among people in their thirties went from eight to 28%. However, provinces (containing cities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam) with the highest proportion of babies born to single mothers contain large immigrant groups among whom casual partnerships are more common. The level of single lone mothers seen for the UK and US is still not matched in the Netherlands .

Proportion of live-born babies by marital status of the mother, 2009

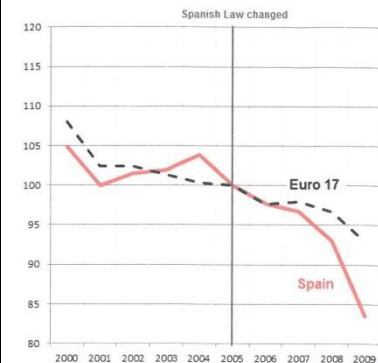


Source: CBS

34. This is happening in what has been a generally family centred country which otherwise more resembles Italy 's than Scandinavian or Anglophone nations- and whether we look at low proportions of children aged three and under attending day care or nursery school, youngsters eating meals with their family, the influence of local citizens on education and tax relief for families. Making registered partnerships available to heterosexuals and distributing the privileges of marriage to uncommitted relationships appears to be associated with the casualization and trivialization of unions.

35. **Spain** saw a pronounced downwards acceleration in its marriage decline following the introduction of same-sex marriage. This started to abate a little by 2009 – perhaps due to more same sex unions being formalized in the event of a centre right government terminating the arrangement (it has not). The annual number of marriages fell by over 14,600 over the first three years (2005-2007) in which same sex couples were able to marry. For the next three years (2008-10), the annual fall was 34,000. The descent is quite precipitous, since Spanish marriage rates (per thousand population) have been reasonably steady compared to some other countries – at 5.9 in 1980: 5.7 in 1990 and 5.4 in 2000 before the plunge to 3.8 in 2009. This includes the more than 18,000 same-sex couples who got married in Spain between 2005 and the end of 2010 (when 2.1 per cent of marriages were between people of the same sex, with 2,216 female). The State Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Transsexuals and bisexuals (ELGBT) believes that the actual number is 23,000, since not all have been recorded.

MARRIAGES INDEX: SPAIN AND EURO AREA: 2000-2009



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	<p>36. At the same time as Spain's socialist government introduced same sex marriage it also brought in legislation known as the 'express divorce' bill, to make the process easier and faster.</p> <p>Again, we have the association between the drive for same sex marriage in the context of a general libertarianism which trivialises and is fundamentally hostile to marriage. The legal change eliminated the need for couples to be physically separated for a period before legal proceedings could begin. In the following year (2006), 126,952 divorces were registered in 2006, a 74.3% increase on the previous year. The sharpest rise was seen in divorces between those who had been married for less than a year: up 330.6%.</p> <p>37. Verdict: Optimistic accounts of a re-vitalisation of marriage or even 'no damage done' are, at very least, premature. This is not saying that same sex marriage is <i>the reason</i> for marital decline anywhere - simply how it does nothing to prevent it.</p> <p>We can be certain that same sex marriage will do no such thing as encourage stable marriage whether for heterosexuals and/or homosexuals. Marriage in Scandinavia, Spain, Netherlands and elsewhere is in deep decline.</p> <p>What does same sex marriage do to marriage?</p> <p>38. Same sex marriage is both an effect and a cause of the evisceration of marriage - especially the separation between this and parenthood. As rising out-of-wedlock births and cohabitation rates - as well as legal changes - disassociate marriage from parenthood, same sex marriage becomes conceivable. If marriage is only about couple relationships, and is not intrinsically connected to parenthood, why not give the leavings to homosexuals? As marriage is redefined to accommodate same-sex couples, this reinforces the irrelevance of marriage to parenthood. Elsewhere, same sex marriage is an instigator for the casualisation of heterosexual unions and separation of marriage and parenthood.</p> <p>39. In the feedback loop, either:</p> <p>'Gay' marriage is the end game of long running anti-marriage and family policy - typified by Sweden. Cohabitation and out-of-wedlock birth rates were rising and marriage rates were falling in Scandinavia long before the enactment of homosexual partnership/marriage laws. These trends are explicable in terms of the removal or reduction of incentives to marry by forces hostile to traditional conjugality. Same sex partnership/marriage then locks in and reinforces existing trends toward the separation of marriage and parenthood.</p> <p>Or:</p> <p>Gay marriage initiates the severance and dismemberment of marriage and family in more family friendly societies, such as Spain and the Netherlands. There is free-fall towards the Scandinavian model – driving "home the message that marriage itself is outdated, and that virtually any 'family form', is acceptable." [27]</p> <p>Either which way, same sex marriage is more a terminus for marriage or ultimate act of dissolution, rather than a force for revival.</p> <p>By products</p> <p>40. Education. Everywhere, the remaking of the sexes has been inseparable from an aggressive policy to equalize 'sexualities' within the context of its overriding ethos that expert elites possess a superior knowledge of how best people should live. In Sweden , the National Academy for Education conducted an extensive review of school material and schools were ordered to 'integrate gender equality and sexual orientation issues into their operations and everyday tasks. Research is meant to focus upon how 'norms and attitudes make homophobia possible' even where there are 'no statistics or consistent studies which can pinpoint discrimination due to sexual orientation', and making what might be considered offensive statements about homosexuality merit a prison term. [28]</p> <p>41. Spreading the practice. There is the suggestion of a big, recent rise in sex ever or recently with a same sex p artner and LGB-i dentities in the Netherlands . [29] Same for Massachusetts . This is, of course, seen elsewhere where there are homosexual endorsing and promoting curricula in schools, but it is likely to increase with same-sex marriage. This has massive health implications.</p> <p>42. Other institutions. Churches in the UK might be better protected from hostile litigation if the established church's legal obligation to marry any eligible persons in England and Wales was ended, or the rights of any religious bodies to conduct marriages were taken away – as in Sweden. Some clearly hope that compulsion to perform same sex weddings will sever church and state and further push Christianity out of the public arena and, therefore, consciousness. [30] Undermined and stigmatized for their unreasonableness and prejudice, the moral authority of religious institutions will further retreat in favour of a narrow secular ideology, particularly as sexual behaviour at odds with traditional norms is further encouraged and advanced.</p>

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	<p>43. The prospect of disciplinary procedures faces chaplains for the NHS, universities, armed forces or anywhere else, even if they were acting in their own church outside work time. Charities may be forced to close if they cannot affirm equal marriage. Bodies which pay to use premises provided by local authorities, like a school hall for a charity sale, face bans - and so the civic and social implications go on. <i>March 2013</i></p> <hr/> <p>[1] Jareborg, M. J., Religious Freedom and Equality: Emerging Conflicts in North America and Europe – a Scandinavian Perspective. The Religious Freedom Project. The Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs. Geortown Uni. April 11-12 2012 [2] Gallagher, M & Baker, J.K Demand for Same-Sex Marriage: Evidence from the U nited States , Canada and Europe iMAPP , 2006 Vol.3 (1) [3] Andersson , G., et al The demographics of same-sex marriages in Norway and Sweden . Demography, 2006 43(1), 79–98. [4] Noack, T., Fekjær, H., Seierstad, A. (2002): Skilsmisser blant lesbiske og homofile partnere – hvem er mest stabile. Samfunnsspeilet nr. 3, 2002 - cited in Christer Hyggen, C with Skevik, A Demography of the family in Norway. First report for the project “Welfare Policy and Employment in the Context of Family Change”, drafted for the meeting 12-13 December 2002 in York, UK NOVA Norwegian Social Research Oslo NORWAY [4] [5] Lund-Anderson, I The Danish Registered Partnership Act 1989 in Wintemute, R & Andenaes, M Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Partnerships, Hart 2001, p.419 [6] Lofquist , D et al Households and Families: 2010 Census Briefs. SEPT. 27, 2011. U.S census Bureau [7] Andersson , G., et al The demographics of same-sex marriages in Norway and Sweden . Demography, 2006 43(1), 79–98. see also Andersson,G et al Divorce-Risk Patterns in Same-Sex Marriages in Norway and Sweden , 2004 at http://www.uni-koeln.de/wiso-fak/fisoz/conference/papers/p_andersson.pdf [8] Lau, Charles, Q The Stability of Same-Sex Cohabitation, Different-Sex Cohabitation, and Marriage. Journal of M arriage and Family 2012 74 pgs. 973-988 [9] Andersson , G., et al The demographics of same-sex marriages in Norway and Sweden . and Andersson,G et al Divorce-Risk Patterns in Same-Sex Marriages in Norway and Sweden ... Op cit [10] Statistics Netherlands , “Number of Registered Partnerships Grew Further in 2010” March 15, 2011 at http://www.cbs.nl/en-menu/themas/bevolking/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2011/2011-3331-wm.htm [11] Kalmijn, M., Loeve, A & Manting, D. Income dynamics in couples and the dissolution of marriage and cohabitation. Demography 2007 44 pgs 159-179 [12] Solomon, S.E et al Money, Housework, Sex, and Conflict: Same-Sex Couples in Civil Unions, Those Not in Civil Unions, and Heterosexual Married Siblings Sex Roles, 2005 Vol. 52, (9/10). 561-575 [13] Frisch M, Bronnum-Hansen H Mortality among men and women in same-sex marriage: a national cohort study of 8333 Danes . Am J Pub Health 2009 99:133–137 [14] Andersson, G., et al The demographics of same-sex marriages in Norway and Sweden. Demography, 2006 43(1), 79–98. [15] Haandrikman . K Bi-national Marriages in Sweden : Is There an EU effect? Research Reports in Demography 2012:2 Stockholm Univ [16] Daugstad, G and Sandnes, T Gender and Migration. Similarities and disparities among women and men in the immigrant population. 2008/10 Statistisk sentralbyrå • Statistics Norway Oslo–Kongsvinger [17] Jareborg, M. J., Religious Freedom and Equality: Emerging Conflicts in North America and Europe – a Scandinavian Perspective. The Religious Freedom Project. The Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs. Geortown Uni. April 11-12 2012 [18] Quoted Glendon, M.A The Transformation of Family Law 1989 Chicago: Univ of Chicago Press p. 274 [19] Carlson, A The Swedish Experiment in Family Politics 1990 New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction & Lewis, H Sweden’s Right to be Human 1982 Allen and Busby, LTd [20] Lewis, H Sweden’s Right to be Human 1982 Allison & Busby p.70 [21] Eskridge,W.N & Spedale , D.R Gay Marriage: for Better or for Worse?:What We’ve Learned from the Evidence ... 2006 Oxford Uni Press. [22] Ibid p.176</p>

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	<p>[23] Christer Hyggen, C with Skevik, A Demography of the family in Norway First report for the project "Welfare Policy and Employment in the Context of Family Change", drafted for the meeting 12-13 December 2002 in York, UK NOVA Norwegian Social Research Oslo NORWAY</p> <p>[24] O'Leary J ibid</p> <p>[25] Eurostat Demography Report 2010 Commission Staff Working Document. EU 2011</p> <p>[26] O'Leary J Will fewer straight people marry if gay people can? Fullfact.org 12.12.2012</p> <p>[27] Kurtz, S The End of Marriage in Scandinavia The Weekly Standard 02.02.2004</p> <p>[28] Hom Ombudsmannen mot Diskriminering Pa Grund av Sexuell Lagging Rapport 2004 Stockholm see Morgan, P Family Policy: Family Changes 2006 Institute for the Study of Civil Society,</p> <p>[29] Kuyper Ine Vanwesenbeeck , L High Levels of Same-Sex Experiences in the Netherlands : Prevalences of Same-Sex Experiences in Historical and International Perspective Jnl of Homosexuality 2009 56. Issue 8 993-1010</p> <p>[30] Murray, D Gay rites . The Spectator 01.10.2011</p> <p>©Parliamentary copyright Prepared 6th March 2013</p>
Joan Hitchen	I strongly disagree that same sex couples should have a Christian marriage
Lesley Jean	Let us keep marriage as the union of a man and a woman. In my opinion, same sex marriage is derisory and detracts from the true institution. Whatever next?
M. Moore (Miss)	<p>I am writing to register my disagreement with the proposal to introduce a same sex marriage bill.</p> <p>I am a Christian and all the Bible's teachings about refer to marriage between a man and woman (Genesis 2:24, 1 Corinthians 7 1-14, & Matthew 19: 4-6)</p> <p>There is no precedent for same sex marriages.</p> <p>The Bible's moral teachings are intended to help us live according to God's will.</p>
Sylvia Fryer	<p>As a born again Christian, I am writing to inform the Chief that I am <u>totally against</u> the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill.</p> <p>I agree with Jesus that marriage is between a man and a woman.</p>
Mr Glenn and Mrs Pauline Walters	<p>We are writing to you to disagree with the above proposed legislation:-</p> <p>(i) In Matthew 19:5, Jesus said, 'For this cause shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh';</p> <p>(ii) Even the marital responsibilities of husbands and wives are defined in the Bible e.g: Ephesians 5:22 says, 'Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.' As for the responsibility of the husbands to wives, Ephesians 5:25 says, 'Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself to it'.</p> <p>From the above Bible references, it can be seen that the marriage relationship was instituted by God and it is supposed to reflect the relationship that the Lord Jesus Christ has with his Church.</p> <p>Therefore, we fail to understand how anyone dare redefine the marriage relationship.</p> <p>Also, from a purely secular perspective; where will the redefinition of marriage end? What will be next? Perhaps 'marriage' between a man and his pet dog or marriage between more than two men or more or more than two women? This sound but we are serious.</p> <p>We therefore strongly object to the proposed legislation despite its acceptance in much of the U.K. and beyond and we sincerely hope that it will never become law.</p>
Mr J Tinsley	As a Christian, I write to lodge my opposition to the Same sex marriage bill 2015 which is to be put to Tynwald for consultation in the year 2016
Mrs Gillian M Tinsley	As a Christian, I write to lodge my opposition to the Same sex marriage bill 2015 which is to be put to Tynwald for consultation in the year 2016
Rev & Mrs C.E. Belfield	<p>I am writing on behalf of my husband and myself in regard to the same-sex couples who wish to marry. This is not what the bible teaches and therefore we <u>do not</u> agree with this.</p> <p>A lot of church people will not be happy with this law if it is passed and the Isle of Man government should take this into consideration.</p> <p>Please make sure are views are heard.</p>
Michael Haynes	The phenomena of dual sex organs or a deformity in creatures is called Hermaphrodites and has been happening for centuries in both humans and

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	<p>livestock. Neither can mate or reproduce and livestock exist until culled. The only Hermaphrodite that I am aware of which have been created by nature is the earthworm.</p> <p>In the human race laws have been laid down over the centuries to work with nature in preventing acts of reproduction between humans when it has been found to produce anomalies or spread disease in the offspring. The problem with H&L's is that some stray in and out of heterosexual relationships and this is a great danger, as sexual disease will be transmitted to the normal population.</p> <p>Homosexuals and Lesbians (H&L's) have been around for centuries, these oddities can not claim to be natural or Hermaphrodites, as they were not born with dual sex organs.</p> <p>The sexual act between two of the same sex cannot be classed as normal, if it was, then how did they get here, not by stork.</p> <p>It is an act totally against nature and what marriage is ordained for.</p> <p>If humans of the same sex wish to live together and keep themselves to themselves, so be it.</p> <p>Marriage is a holy covenant before god between man and woman, degrading marriage by H&L's in a god-fearing community is totally wrong. Marriage must be kept as nature intended to support the family unit and the health reproduction of the human race, if this, do as you like attitude continue then mother nature will step with more decease's to check the human population, as has happened in the past.</p> <p>This Island is a small family based human society compared to England, bringing up good strong health children and should be protected by the islands government and any government minister who is that way inclined should stand aside and not forced same sex marriages into law.</p> <p>If these people need this way of life then move to a large country, try Brighton, Sussex, which is set up for all their needs and would welcome them.</p> <p>I have always have lived in a Christian country, I do not like H&L's have put up with them over many years, but object strongly of having this disgusting habit forced down my throat against -my human rights.</p>
<p>Phil Lo Bao Minister Grace Baptist Church, Port Erin</p>	<p>I wish to make this submission on behalf of the Grace Baptist Church (Port Erin).</p> <p>Question 1 of the Consultative Document asks whether we agree or disagree with same sex marriage. The Church wishes to express its total opposition to the proposed legislation. As a Christian Church we believe that marriage is a union between one man and one woman. That has been the case since ordinance of marriage was introduced by God in the Book of Genesis and will continue to be so until the end of time.</p> <p>Given our total opposition to the concept of so called "same sex marriage", there is little to say concerning the other questions in the Consultative Document. However, we would wish to make the following additional comments:</p> <p>(a) We are pleased that no Church will be compelled to conduct so called "same sex marriage".</p> <p>(b) The Church will certainly not opt into the ability to conduct such ceremonies.</p> <p>(c) This Church will continue to teach what the Bible states about marriage (for example in the book of Genesis Chapter 2 verse 24 and the Gospel of Mark Chapter 10 verses 6 &7), and we trust that our freedom of speech to do so will be maintained.</p>
<p>Phil Lo Bao (Mr), Chris Lo Bao (Mrs)</p>	<p>We would like to make the following points in response to the consultation documents questions:</p> <p>1. We do not agree with the proposed legislation. Marriage is something provided for the good of society and consists of the union of one man and one woman, not the coming together of two men or two women.</p> <p>To allow same sex marriage is to contradict the whole concept of marriage as being that a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife. Same sex marriage is clearly forbidden in God's Holy Law which is applicable to all people in all generations. Professor Blackstone famously commented in his "Commentaries on the Law of England" in 1765 that:</p> <p><i>"God's moral law is of course superior in obligation. It is binding over all the globe in all countries and at all times; no human laws are of any validity if contrary to this."</i></p> <p>His observation is as valid today as it was then.</p> <p>2. Given or total opposition to the concept, we wish to make no comment upon the remaining questions in the consultative document, except to say:</p> <p>(a) We suspect the whole consultation process is rather a farce as the Government is determined to bring in this legislation come what may.</p> <p>(b) The Tynwald Day Church service will become even more hypocritical for those Members who support this legislation because they sing and pray that God's will should be done in the Island. Yet the very thing they are proposing is entirely opposed to God's will. At the very least those Members who support this Bill should withdraw from the Tynwald Day Church service.</p>

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Geoffrey C Bushill	<p>(c) How can Tynwald ask the Lord of Mann, who is defender of the faith, to give Royal Assent to a Bill that is plainly totally contrary to that faith?</p> <p>I wish to strongly to the Same Sex Marriage Bill 2015. From Adam and Eve to the present time the Bible has presented marriage as one of each for the procreation of children. Sexual behaviour between those of the same sex was practiced among the heathen people in Sodom (Genesis 19:4 etc.), who suffered the most terrible judgement on human sin. The incident is mentioned throughout the Bible as being a major cause of God's Judgement upon any Nation that allows (let alone Promotes) such behaviour. Today we have those who loudly reject by any means including the Press, Radio and Television, anything that has been the bedrock of Society, thinking that they are not subject to the judgement of God. The mighty Roman Empire embraced same sex relationships and general promiscuity as the normal practice--but where is the Roman Empire now? The Bible says that "it is righteousness that exalts a Nation, but Sin is a disgrace to any people" (Prov,14:34). I don't therefore want to see the Isle of Man accept Sodomy as the normal lifestyle, furthering the degredation of all the right values that "exalt a nation"</p>
Ian Davidson	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? No, I do not agree that same sex couples should be married for the following reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First and foremost it is a biological impossibility for two people of the same sex to be married. Whatever the bill seeks to achieve, it cannot create equal "marriage" because from the dawn of time, marriage has been between a male and female. Genesis 2:25 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 2. The Word of God specifically speaks against same sex relationships and those who practice such behaviour will not inherit the Kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 6:10. 3. The Bill acknowledges that it cannot provide equality of marriage, because it creates the absurd situation of two people being either "wife and wife" or "husband and husband" In true marriage no such problem exists, because who is the wife and who is the husband is determined biologically. 4. One of the main purposes of marriage is for procreation and the establishment of families. This purpose is obviously impossible with same sex "marriage" and actually underlines the absurdity of the whole idea. 5. Same sex marriage makes a mockery of true marriage by attempting to redefine what Almighty God in his infinite wisdom has ordained. The true pattern of marriage has been accepted as the norm for centuries by all cultures and whatever is put in its place, will never be, nor can be regarded as marriage. 6. The reasons for annulment of a same sex marriage do not mirror those of true marriage, thus acknowledging that such a partnership is not marriage. For example same sex couples are incapable of consummating their marriage and the law recognises this, therefore it is not included as grounds for divorce. Same sex "marriage" couples cannot divorce on grounds of adultery either, unless committed with someone of the opposite sex. Same sex marriage is therefore a legal fiction. <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No, for the reasons given in answer to the first question. <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The present draft makes it clear that there is an opt out clause for any churches/ministers who do not wish to perform a same sex "wedding" This so called protection does not extend to other members of the public. A Civil Registrar for example has no choice in the matter. The Bill should include a conscience clause for all persons who do not agree with same sex marriage, so that they will not be held liable for refusing to perform contracts for goods and services promoting same sex marriage, or providing goods and services for any same sex wedding ceremony. 2. The Bill should include a freedom of speech clause. This will protect any person from any legal action on grounds of harassment for publically opposing same sex marriage, or same sex relationships and promoting the traditional and Christian view of marriage. <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This Bill if it becomes law will overturn what has been the bedrock of all stable societies since creation. The bottom line is that the Isle of Man Government has no right to redefine what God has established for his glory and the good of mankind. The Members of Tynwald acknowledge this each

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	<p>year when they attend the annual Tynwald Day Service and ask for God's blessings.</p> <p>2. The Bill rather than creating equality will create a hierarchy of rights where it will demand to be accepted and will be most intolerant of anyone who opposes it. This has been demonstrated in several cases in the UK and Northern Ireland when Christians have lost jobs, been demoted, or sued for doing no more than standing for Christian principles regarding sexual relationships. The Bill will therefore create division, not equality and will result in needless legal actions against otherwise law abiding citizens.</p> <p>3. Should this Bill become law it will not be long before other minority groups start a campaign to have their "rights" acknowledged on the same grounds. How can anyone refuse someone wanting to marry two men, or a man and a women? What about those who have other sexual preferences? Will they not demand to have their "rights" acknowledged. Some will say this is far- fetched and ridiculous, but would not the same things have be said of sex marriage some 30 or 40 years ago? The Isle of Man may have "moved on" but in what direction? Certainly not towards godliness and Christian morality.</p>
Mr Peter Murcott	<p>1: The Specific Questions</p> <p>1.1: Question One: "Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?"</p> <p>1.1.1. The stated aim of the Government's proposed Bill is for "equal marriage". This raises the questions -</p> <p>(a) Is this something that <i>ought</i> to be available, which the words "should be able to get married" imply?;</p> <p>(b) Is this something that is literally capable of being achieved?; and</p> <p>(c) What are the reasons against it?</p> <p>1.1.2: As far as 1.1.1 (a) is concerned, the question is purely academic, as the rest of this response will demonstrate.</p> <p>1.1.3: The short answer to 1. 1. 1 (b) is that same-sex couples physically <i>cannot</i> get married. This is because of the very nature of marriage. The leading case of <i>Hyde v Hyde & Woodmansee</i> (1866), contained this definition: "Marriage is the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others" .</p> <p>1.1.4: The words "to the exclusion of others" in the context of the judgment excluded polygamy, but they are equally capable of applying to all other variations that may be, or have been, proposed, including the marriage of persons of the same sex. This is because of the essential "man and woman" requirement.</p> <p>1.1.5: This, in tum, reflects the created order of human beings. The position was stated as unalterable for all time by God the Father in Genesis 2:24, and was reiterated by God the Son in Mark 10:6-7: "But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave [or 'be joined'] to his wife ... "</p> <p>1.1.6: The draft Bill and the comparable English legislation effectually acknowledges the physical impossibility of achieving "equal marriage" -</p> <p>(a) the parties to such a union will be known as "husband and husband" or "wife and wife"⁸ respectively, which is not the case of truly married people; moreover,</p> <p>(b) there is a bizarre provision in the English legislation, concerning a ground for annulment of a "same sex" marriage, that the respondent was pregnant by someone other than the applicant at the time of the marriage.⁹ This presupposes that the respondent was capable of being made pregnant by the applicant, which, in the case of same sex couples, is impossible;</p> <p>(c) the proposed legislation contains no provision about adultery by same-sex couples, other than the heterosexual definition,¹⁰ sometimes referred to as "the marital offence". This concedes that there can be only one form of marriage; and</p> <p>(d) the proposed legislation contains no provision regarding consummation, since the very word necessarily entails heterosexual intercourse.¹¹</p> <p>1.1.7: "Equal marriage" for same sex couples is literally and factually impossible, <i>because they are physically ineligible</i>. True marriage requires a man and a woman. Anything else is a mirage.</p> <p>1.1.8 Thus the Biblical objection, raised in paragraph 1.1.5 above, is in every sense traceable to the created order. The proposed Bill's purpose can no more be achieved than would an Act of Tynwald that declared that the waves of the sea shall henceforth never again breach the sea-walls at Castletown,</p>

⁸ This would be the effect of Schedule 1, Part 2 NEW MANX LEGISLATION, paragraph 5(1) & (2)

⁹ The identical provision is to be found nullity provisions of the Manx Civil Partnership Act 2011 at section 48(1)(c)

¹⁰ See: paragraph 3.29 (pages 9 & 10) of the Consultation Document

¹¹ See: paragraph 3.29 (page 10), at the fourth bullet point

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	<p>or erode the coastline at Kirk Michael.</p> <p>1.1.9: Therefore the answer to Question One is "No", because the proposition: - (a) is completely contrary to the created order and to the laws of God; and (b) is plainly impossible; therefore (c) it falls neatly within a category of legislation, identified by Chief Justice Coke in <i>Dr Bonham's Case</i> (1608), as being "against right and reason, or ... impossible to be performed" .</p> <p>1.1.10: The above answer means that Question 2 is inapplicable to this response.</p> <p>1.2. Question Three: "Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?"</p> <p>1.2.1: Without prejudice to this fundamental opposition to the proposed Marriage (Same Sex Parties) Bill, the following comments and recommendations are made.</p> <p>1.2.2: One acknowledges the provisions whereby no church would be directly affected by the proposed legislation, so that non-Anglican Churches would have to opt in if they wished to conduct "same sex couples marriages", and that they cannot be compelled to do so (paragraph 2.4, page 5).</p> <p>1.2.3: Nevertheless, since marriage lies at the very foundation of society, there are other forms of protection needed, beyond the conduct of weddings, for those people who disagree with this legislation either on conscientious or religious grounds. They are: -</p> <p>1.2.4: A Freedom of Expression Protection Clause</p> <p>1.2.4.1: It has been opined by more than one person that the United Kingdom's forthcoming Extremism Disruption Orders legislation, which may eventually be enacted in the Isle of Man, could eventually be applied to silence anyone in the teaching profession, who specifically teaches that same-sex marriage is wrong.¹²</p> <p>1.2.4.2: The words "teaching profession" also encompass further education colleges and universities, which could well inhibit the customary and essential evaluation, examination and criticism of existing laws, being part and parcel of a legal education.</p> <p>1.2.4.3: Such an inhibition would be totally contrary to a truly democratic society, as opposed to societies, such as the former German Democratic Republic.</p> <p>1.2.4.4: It is strongly recommended therefore that, for the removal of all doubt, a free speech clause be inserted in the Bill to the effect that nothing in this Act shall be taken as inhibiting, preventing, discouraging, penalising or otherwise prohibiting or deterring the mere expression of opposition to, disagreement with, or the raising of arguments against the provisions of marriage for same sex couples.</p> <p>1.2.5: A Freedom of Conscience Clause</p> <p>1.2.5.1: It is regrettable that there will be no freedom of conscience clause for those who work in the registry.</p> <p>1.2.5.2: In United Kingdom schools, marriage education is part of the curriculum. This also raises issues of conscience.</p> <p>1.2.5.3: Conscience clauses in this regard would be analogous to those relating to Religious Education and Worship in schools.</p> <p>1.2.5.4: It is strongly recommended therefore that there should be a freedom of conscience clause to permit those who are employed in the registry to opt out of participating in the marriage of persons of the same sex, and that this should also extend to those who may be required to teach marriage as part of the ordinary school curriculum.</p> <p>1.2.6: An Employment Protection Clause</p> <p>There should be a protective provision in the Employment Act 2006, for those employees who disagree with same-sex marriage. This provision would apply to the appointment, the promotion, or the demotion of, or the imposition of any detriment to, or the dismissal of any such employee.</p> <p>1.2.7: A Conscience Clause for Registrars</p> <p>There should be an analogous opt-out clause in relation to civil marriages, comparable to those relating to religious premises (see: the commentary on Clause 8, pages 6 & 7, at paragraphs 3.9 and 3.13).</p> <p>1.3: Question Four: "Do you have any other relevant comments?"</p>

¹² The Christian Institute's Autumn, 2015, Newsletter

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	<p>1.3.1: Unbiblical</p> <p>1.3.1.1: The proposed legislation is unbiblical, unconstitutional, and will have unpleasant consequences.</p> <p>1.3.1.2: As for being unbiblical, it has already been observed that the unchangeable nature of the status of marriage was established by God the Father at the creation and was upheld by God the Son in His earthly ministry.</p> <p>1.3.1.3: There are other portions of Scripture that are entirely in conformity with this.¹³ There is not a single reference in the Bible that remotely refers to, or recognises, let alone authorises, 'same-sex marriage'.</p> <p>1.3.2: Unconstitutional</p> <p>1.3.2.1: The constitutional order of the United Kingdom and of the Isle of Man is Christian.</p> <p>1.3.2.2: This is to be seen in the following ways: -</p> <p>(a) The British coinage declares that the Head of State, H M Queen Elizabeth II, holds her position D.G. [Dei Gratia - "by the grace of God"]. That is an acknowledgement of the truth of Romans 13:1 that "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. "</p> <p>(b) Thus all political power is delegated by God, to be exercised in accordance with His Word.</p> <p>(c) This is not dependent upon any human agreement or acknowledgement. It is a factual reality. This was recognised by Professor Blackstone in his <i>Commentaries of the Laws of England</i>, 1765: "God's moral law is of course superior in obligation. It is binding all over the globe in all countries and at all times; no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this".</p> <p>(d) Therefore it is completely irrelevant that certain Legislatures throughout the British Isles or beyond have either passed laws to provide for 'same sex marriage',¹⁴ or are proposing to do so, with or without referenda. Such laws are effectively null and void from the start.</p> <p>(e) The British coinage also describes the Queen as 'F.D.' or 'Fid. Def.' – the abbreviations for 'Fidei Defensatrix',¹⁵ - 'The Defender of the Faith'. That means the Christian faith. The title was ratified by Parliament in an Act of 1543.¹⁶ It is still in force, and it extends to the Isle of Man.</p> <p>(f) The title was given further force by the Coronation Oath Act 1688, section 3, which requires the Monarch solemnly to swear that, to the utmost of her power, she will maintain the Laws of God and the True Profession of the Gospel. This Act also extends to the Isle of Man.</p> <p>(g) The cumulative effect of these laws is that Parliament regards the Christian faith as being of supreme importance and that its tenets should underpin all legislation: else why would Parliament require the Monarch to swear an oath in this regard? This places a clear obligation upon all Legislatures not to pass any Bill which contravenes the Laws of God, nor to present any such Bill for the Royal Assent.</p> <p>(h) The Manx Legislature specifically acknowledges this obligation both by its prayers before each sitting, and also by the prayers at the annual Tynwald Day Service on July 5th at the Royal Chapel of St John.</p> <p>(i) This means that the proposed Bill for 'Same Sex Marriage' should not only be dropped forthwith, but that its predecessor, the Civil Partnership Act 2011, should be repealed.¹⁷</p> <p>1.3.3: Unpleasant Consequences</p> <p>1.3.3.1: This Bill is not to be viewed in isolation. It is part and parcel of other legislation that will create potential difficulties for Christians whom the very constitutional order is designed to protect.</p> <p>1.3.3.2: For instance, although the proposed Equality Bill includes religion as a "Protected Characteristic", there are other "protected characteristics" - one of them being "sexual orientation". The problem is compounded by the fact that the definition of religion is very vague and wide-ranging, and like the expression "sexual orientation", it is capable of infinite expansion. Practical experience of the application of the statutory duty upon public bodies to promote equality, known as their "equality duties", has meant, in effect, that there is a hierarchy of rights, with the Christian conscience subservient to all</p>

¹³ For instance: Christ's endorsement of marriage as it has always been understood by His attendance at the Wedding at Cana in Galilee (John 2:1-11). See also: 1 Corinthians 7:13 &14; Colossians 3:19; 1 Timothy 3:2 &12; 1 Timothy 5:9; Titus 1:6, 1 Peter 3:7, and many others

¹⁴ See: the Introduction to this Consultation, page 3, paragraphs 1.1 – 1.5

¹⁵ This is because the present monarch is a woman; otherwise it is 'Fidei Defensor'

¹⁶ Anno 35 Henry VIII, Cap. III

¹⁷ The Civil Partnership Act 2011 is couched in the language of marriage throughout; it effectively provides for 'same sex marriage' by section 4(1)(b), which prohibits a Civil Partnership where either of the parties is already a civil partner or lawfully married.

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	<p>others.</p> <p>1.3.3.3: That this is set to continue is to be seen, for instance, by the fact that marriage registrars will have no right under the proposed Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill to opt out from same-sex marriages on the grounds of conscience.</p> <p>1.3.3.4: Already there is a growing reluctance amongst members of the public to express in a rational and reasoned manner any opposition to this fundamental and far-reaching change to the laws on marriage in the British Isles, for fear of being labelled as "bigots" or "homophobes".</p> <p>1.3.3.5: Of course, informed members of the public will know that "bigots" is a corruption of the expression "the by-Godites" ["By God's grace here I stand"] - originally used to describe those people in Mary 1's reign (1553-1558) who were burnt at the stake rather than recant their beliefs. However, this does not assist those people who are either unaware of this, or who, nevertheless, allow themselves to be bullied into virtual silence.</p> <p>1.3.3.6: As for "homophobes", in the everyday sense, it is a virtually meaningless expression; though its effect bears an eerie and growing resemblance to that vague and yet devastating Stalinist accusation of being "an enemy of the people", raised during the darkest period of Communism. The precedents are neither encouraging nor conducive to the preservation and promotion of responsible freedom of expression.</p> <p>1.3.3.7: The literal meaning of "homophobia" surely means some irrational fear of man in general. In that sense, all Christians should avoid it and oppose it, since <i>'The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe'</i> [Proverbs 29:25].¹⁸</p> <p>1.3.3.8: In the question "equal marriage", the fear of man causes an increasing number of people to keep quiet, purely for their own self-preservation, rather than to speak the truth in love.¹⁹ This is most regrettable for all concerned.</p> <p>1.3.3.9: The cumulative effect of this is a reluctant conformity to the prevailing orthodoxy. Moreover, an effect of the proposed law, if enacted, and of other measures in support of it, will be to 'pinch men's (and women's) consciences', especially those of Christians - something which Oliver Cromwell famously declined to do, and about which he upbraided certain Members of Parliament in 1655.²⁰</p> <p>2: In Conclusion</p> <p>2.1: The proposed legislation is opposed. All the arguments in its favour could equally be used for introducing polygamy in various forms; indeed, there are some people already in parts of Europe and America who are pressing for this.</p> <p>2.2: 'Same Sex Marriage' was effectively created in 2011 by the Civil Partnership Act, which was couched throughout in the language of marriage. The only difference between that statute and the draft Bill is that the latter specifically acknowledges what the 2011 Act provided. 2.3: Since all the above objections apply equally to the Civil Partnership Act 2011, it should be repealed.</p> <p>2.3: Since all of the above objections apply equally to the Civil Partnership Act 2011, it should be repealed.</p> <p>2.4: One would add that the arguments about 'love' that are bandied around today in support of "equal marriage" are seriously misplaced and misapplied. True love is inextricable from obedience to God's Word.²¹ It is not "loving" to capitulate to demands that set a nation, or its citizens, on a collision course with the Courts of Heaven, and destroy its very foundations.</p> <p>2.5: The Christian Gospel, which our constitution seeks to maintain,²² is about saving men's lives, not destroying them.²³ Therefore it is respectfully recommended that, instead of proceeding with the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill, the Manx Government assists the Queen, the Lord of Mann, to</p>

¹⁸ Thus the great hymn writer, Charles Wesley, wrote: -

"Preserve me from my calling's snare,
And hide my simply soul above,
Above the thorns of choking care,
The gilded baits of worldly love."

¹⁹ See: Ephesians 4:15

²⁰ See: *The Clarke Papers*, Volume II, Selections from the Papers of William Clarke, p.13

²¹ See: John 14:21; 1 John 5:2 &3; 2 John 6

²² See: the Coronation Oath Act 1688, section 3

²³ 2: See: Luke 9:56

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	<p>defend the Christian faith, by taking any appropriate step or by enacting any appropriate measure that tends to promote (as the Prayer Book puts it) true Religion and Virtue.²⁴</p> <p>2.6: Thereby can the Isle of Man truly become (as the National Anthem puts it) a "gem of God's earth" .</p>
Pat Gelling	<p>In the hope of better understanding between all the parties, I offer my understanding of marriage to the debate.</p> <p>From the beginning, in the creation stories of the Bible (Genesis 1 & 2) God makes clear His desire to create beings who would be in His image "in the image of God he created them" (i.e. man/mankind) "male & female he created them". God is neither male nor female, but both these natures reflect something of His & never more so than when they are in harmony with one another.</p> <p>The second story emphasises this, with the woman being made out of the side of the man "bone of my bone & fresh of my flesh", to show that when they are joined together in love "they will become one flesh". This description of the closest of our human unions has been the basis for what we call marriage: & is a relationship which, in the joining together of the two sexes, is meant to reflect something of the wholeness & harmony which is in God.</p> <p>Clearly, by their very nature, same sex relationships are a different kind of relationship & so cannot do this.</p> <p>In the marriage ceremony the couple commit themselves to God's vision of unity with one another & with Him & his chosen way of continuing to create, though us, by the gift of children. It is a commitment to one another of love & sacrifice, if it is to work & this reflects the LOVE of God revealed to us in Jesus.</p>
M Kneen (Mrs)	<p>I am writing regarding the proposed same sex marriage bill. I realise that the Isle of Man generally follows the lead of Britain in so many ways but I am so sorry they are doing in this direction. If this bill went through the I.O.M Government would be legalising something which GOD in His Word clearly abhors. Romans 1 v.26- and in the New Testament states this so clearly. The Government would be in direct opposition to the Word of GOD.</p> <p>We know that everyone has free will and can do what they want within reason but the consequences of legalising same sex marriage would be very detrimental to free speech and those of us who are Christians would be affected, for instance the case of the baker in Ireland who could not in all good conscience bake the cake for a homosexual couple.</p> <p>They have actually been criminalised for breaking the law!</p> <p>Christians <u>love</u> homosexuals and are tolerant, but do not condone what they do. I believe Nigeria was one country which stood firm on this matter when the American President visited that country and tried to impose this way of life which, according to Scripture is unnatural — GOD created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve!</p> <p>Thank you for reading this letter. I am enclosing an article from the Christian Institute for your information.</p> <p>I believe that there is a connection between the prosperity of a country and its adherence to GOD's Law. "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people".</p>

²⁴ 'Virtues' are superior 'values', because they emphasise that which is unchanging, stable, steadfast, and sure – not being dependent upon the shifting sands of fashion or mere human opinion

Supportive responses

Respondent	Comments
Hon Juan Watterson MHK	<p>I am writing to support the concept of same sex marriage.</p> <p>I notice that Schedule 2, Part 3 makes complex provisions for divorce. I would like to suggest that the opportunity be taken to introduce 'no fault divorce' provisions for all couples. Whilst fault may be useful to the Courts in determining the allocation of assets, it should not be up to the state to deny any person their liberty in this respect. Such restrictions only serve to force people into unethical behaviours on the basis that they have to find "grounds" or wait five years.</p> <p>With marriage no longer being a purely religious preserve, it seems sensible to take a similarly practical view of divorce and allow the state to remove its requirements in this area. The days of requiring an Act of Tynwald to divorce are long gone, let's finish the job and make it accessible.</p>
Mary Brew Age 56 Happily Married (and everyone else should have the right in law to be able to be as well!)	<p>I thought there would be a questionnaire to fill in in order to get a demographic of respondents?</p> <p>Please go ahead with Option 4 without delay, the sooner the better.</p> <p>Would also appreciate legislation to charge for plastic bags asap.</p> <p>We are so far behind with all of these things together with rates revision!</p>
Jacqueline Allen and family	<p>I am a Christian who regularly attends church and is involved with its meetings and running and I couldn't disagree with Bishop Robert more! One day we will look back on this decision and say 'Why did it take so long?'</p> <p>Question 1 - yes</p> <p>As an island we need to be forward thinking and encouraging. Our youngsters need to know relationships between same sex couples is equal, loving and accepted.</p> <p>I feel very strongly on this subject and any vote other than yes would be deeply hurtful as one day I would love to see my own daughter married to the woman she loves.</p> <p>I know others may feel differently but we need to hold our heads up and do the right thing.</p>
Quentin Martin	<p>Good luck with the bill - here are my answers!</p> <p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>I agree.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>In general, yes. Though I do not believe that religions should be able to refuse to perform same sex marriages - religious beliefs are not grounds to discriminate. Any where an opposite marriage is allowed to legally take place, so should a same sex, and grounds for refusal should not, and cannot, be based on the sex of the participants.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>Other than whole hearted support!</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>None that I didn't cover by answering question two - religion does not give you the right to hold discriminatory beliefs.</p>
John Motley	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>Agree, absolutely.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? In general (not just in the case of same sex marriage), it is a good thing to base IoM legislation on that from elsewhere in the United Kingdom. This is particularly true for social legislation. These matters can be challenging, and Acts often represent significant research and investment in their preparation. Social conditions here are often very similar, so the assumption should be that English or UK legislation should always be the basis, unless there are uniquely different circumstances on the Isle of Man. What about medical treatment? We routinely send patients to England. Is there a risk that treatments might be carried out which are at variance with IoM law? Could IoM Dept. Health be sued as a consequence? Better to ensure that legislation is consistent. Could I make a plea here for the Mental Capacity Act. (MCA - UK 2005) This legislation protects the vulnerable by providing a framework for respecting their decisions, when they have the appropriate capacity for the circumstances of an individual decision. It provides definitions on which processes and other laws can be based. e.g. Advance Decisions. A future Assisted Dying Act would not be possible without the MCA as a basis. In the absence of IoM legislation, it is the de facto (de jure?) law here in any case. Training at Nobles Hospital is on the basis that the UK law should be followed in any case as best practice. 10 years, and still no sign of it here. To those who complain that the Keys 'just rubber stamp' English legislation, I would argue that introducing similar legislation up to 20 years late gives the island a reactionary image. Although it might attract Conservative new residents, it is more likely to reinforce a perception of the IoM as socially backward, and cause other reputational damage. No man is an island, and this Island has too much naive nationalism. Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? It contains appropriate protection for those who hold strong conflicting beliefs. I can see no reason to criticise it. Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? No Footnote:- Advance Decisions. I tried last year to agree such a document with my GP. I was told 'these have no legal status in IoM, but we can make a note on your records'. In other words, the document guarantees me no protection (or protection for medical practitioners). I can envisage situations where deficiencies in Manx law might force me to become resident in England.</p>
Christine Cowley	<p>Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? AGREE If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? Please refer to it as EQUAL marriage! Marriage is marriage. Equality is what is needed. Otherwise, please stop wasting time and money and pass the legislation. Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? I could certainly comment on the religious aspects - but that is irrelevant; as indeed it should be in the decision making process. Especially if even a strongly catholic county like the Republic of Ireland can agree to equal marriage rights. Do you have any other relevant comments? Why are we even asking the question as to whether we should pass this legislation?! If the majority vote in the Republic of Ireland is for equal marriage and even the USA has passed legislation in favour we should too! In this day and age, it is ridiculous not to have equal marriage rights on the island. It was embarrassing that it took so long for the island to make homosexuality legal. <u>We cannot be left behind on this matter any longer.</u></p>
Sue Strang	Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? Agree. It's been delayed too long.

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? Base it on the UK – easiest and quickest way.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? No.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? Shame the Anglican Church can get its act together to allow same sex marriage.</p>
Rebecca Flint	<p>1) Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? I agree.</p> <p>2) If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? I think it is sensible to make it similar to England, for ease of migration for both Manx couples and English couples</p> <p>3) Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? No</p> <p>4) Do you have any other relevant comments? No</p>
Vera Walker	Just get on with it. There is no reason why same sex couples should not be allowed to marry on the Isle of Man.
David Asbridge	Please record my agreement of the proposed legislation.
Sarah Kelly	<p>I am writing my response in favour of same sex marriage.</p> <p>We and my partner of three years have recently got engaged and we would like to get married on the Island in front of our family and friends. We are proud to be manx and the Island is our home, it would be a shame to have to go off Island to get a proper marriage.</p>
Catherine Lane (Mrs)	<p>1) Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? Yes.</p> <p>2) If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? No. But expect the IOM legislation to allow same sex couples all the same rights, benefits and legal standing as couples of opposite sex.</p> <p>3) Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? Whilst i understand allowing religious institutions to opt out of conducting same sex marriages in a church, their refusal must be reasonable. Refusing to marry a same sex couple when one or both are members of the congregation and attends church regularly, then they should not be denied.</p> <p>4) Do you have any other relevant comments? Just to reiterate my answer to question 2.</p>
Mr R Kirby	<p>1. I agree with same sex couples being able to get married.</p> <p>2. I consider it to be a sensible and positive thing to look at a law from the UK and to adopt and adapt to meet the needs of the Island and its population.</p> <p>3. The draft appears to cover the requirements of those who wish to marry where in a same sex population.</p> <p>4. It is a real positive that this has now come to being a reality.</p>
Paul	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? YES</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? Seems a reasonable way to proceed</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? No</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? No</p>
Kirsten Robinson	<p>1. I agree that equal marriage should be brought in as soon as possible. this is an absolute must, we cannot be a country which discriminates so blatantly against members of our own population. there is simply no good reason not to do it. it will bring economic benefit as well as social.</p> <p>2. There seems little reason not to follow the UK Bill in general principle.</p> <p>3. The draft bill seems satisfactory to me.</p> <p>4. Faith is mentioned as a possible reason to not bring in marriage equality. in reality this is simply nonsense. We do not make our laws based on the will of the church. nor does the church own in any way the idea of marriage. there is no reason why their potential opposition, or that of any person on</p>

Respondent	Comments
	religious grounds should be entertained. if they do not want gay marriage then the answer is simple, they don't have to get one. the church of England opposed gay marriage as though marriage is something they invented, which is clearly not the case. they might as well complain about the specifications of the next iPhone for all the relevance it has. furthermore, even if you do consider their opposition, the church has redefined marriage repeatedly throughout its' history, so the notion that it can't be changed now is ludicrous in the extreme. unless they are also going to require that rapists marry their victims, or that men marry their brother's widow, or that women be sold in exchange for livestock then clearly their opposition is based on a very cherry picked interpretation of the bible. Equal marriage is a must in this country. it is no longer acceptable to persecute a group of citizens in this way.
Catherine Martin	Where do I vote yes!! Allow it
Mark Gould	Will you please register my support for this Bill. Should you need any further information as to why I support this Bill, please do not hesitate to contact me.
Katherine Keenan	I would like to show my support for the same sex marriage bill. Many people on the IOM support it (https://www.facebook.com/loveisleofman) and legalisation is absolutely the right thing to do.
Debbie Dixon	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? YES. My partner and I are to be married on the 2nd January 2016 in The Lake District in England.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? NO. It makes no sense to change the UK approach.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? NO.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comment YES. I am not entirely sure why this has going through a consultation process. If this was a bill that related to race or disability then people would be appalled at such a notion. People have been attracted to the same sex since time began and why we are still debating the rights and wrongs in 2015 is beyond me. Whilst I am delighted that my marriage will be recognised in my home country I am also incensed that this has become a 'public matter' as his leaves me and my partner feeling less valid than a 'normal' straight couple. I fully support the introduction of same sex marriage.</p>
Ewan Farghar	Not before time , the Island which seems open and free has always dragged its feet over equal treatment of everyone . Please pass this legislation before the next election or it will drag on forever
Joney Faraghar	Just to support the Chief Minister's proposal to introduce same-sex marriage. I actually cannot believe that we are having to 'consult' upon this issue - it's a complete non-issue. If two adults wish to marry, they should be able to do so freely - it is none of anyone else's business. It's a shame that the Chief Minister has taken so long to raise this issue, as it is also a shame that the only issue Mr Bell is willing to be forward-thinking upon is one that affects him personally. However - that aside, of course we as a nation should do this.
Heather Medley	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) I agree that same sex couples should be able to get married. 2) if the island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriages, I have no further comments to add other than that it's awful that it hasn't been allowed sooner. 3) I have no comments on the draft marriage bill provided. 4) other comments: marriage and love are part of humanity and human rights. Taking that away, based on something as insignificant as sex, us disregarding those rights. Same sex marriages should be allowed. .
Rhiannon Williams	Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? - I agree that same sex couples should be able to get married. If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? - I think the general principle of bringing Manx legislation in line with equivalent UK legislation is a good idea.

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? - The draft bill seems fair and inclusive. Any other comments - Another essential stage in bringing Manx legislation up to date in the modern human rights field is the quick introduction of the Equality Act.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to consult on this important matter.</p>
Becky Saunders	<p>Q1) I agree that same sex couples should be able to get married.</p> <p>Q2) To be free from discrimination of any sort because of whom has married who</p> <p>Q3) No</p> <p>Q4) Why hasn't same sex marriage already been made legal in the Isle of Man?</p>
Elizabeth Quayle	<p>1) I believe same sex couples should be allowed to get married. Why should the right of marriage only be granted to a percentage of the population? The role marriage plays in today's world is completely different to the role it played only 100 years ago, as marriage is no longer solely for those with religious belief. One would hope that the vast majority of today's marriages are marriages of love, so why can't marriage be extended to more people who are in loving relationships, regardless of gender? Gender should not be a deciding factor in marriage.</p> <p>2) If the UK's legislation has been proven to work, then I have no problem with the Island's legislation being based on this.</p> <p>3) I agree with the notion that religious parties may choose to opt-out of same-sex marriages, should they choose to do so. As marriage was originally a solely religious ceremony, I feel the church and other religious bodies should have their beliefs protected.</p> <p>4) I am very glad a bill such as this Is finally being discussed in the House of Keys, as it is well overdue and I hope very much that it will be passed.</p>
Chris Gregory	<p>Rediculous we even need to consult on human rights and equality issues. Yes yes and yes this should happen.</p>
Robin Faragher	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>Agree.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>That would be the ideal.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>No. Seems fine.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>No.</p>
Miss Amy Louise Hill	<p>I am not writing on behalf of an organisation, my responses to the Consultation Questions are as follows: -</p> <p><u>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</u></p> <p>Yes I agree that same sex couples should be able to get married, I believe that it is only fair. I understand that many religions would contradict my view, however based on the statistics of other Countries it would appear the majority of people are in favour of allowing same sex couples to marry. The need is to understand that there is marriage in the eyes of the law and in the house of God, and that same sex couples are not trying to destroy the sanctity of the latter. Greater equality would hopefully create a greater sense of community in time. It would be good if rather than negative opinions people were trying to embrace and respect that two people would like to spend the rest of their lives together. Even if people struggle to wholeheartedly support same sex marriage I think respect of another human should lead to tolerance. As a heterosexual who is not religious how can it be justified that just because I am attracted to people of the opposite sex I should be allowed to marry despite my lack of faith. It is unfortunate, that the issue requires such debate, but why should I have a right that another person can not? Everyone deserves a fairytale day, should that be their wishes, most people think about what their wedding day will be like from a young age. The reason one wants to get married because of feelings to the person they love, to be told that because the person you feel love is the same gender to have that dream taken away is not just.</p> <p><u>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</u></p> <p>Not particularly, the the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom seems to be acceptable. Therefore basing the Islands's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom would be a reasonable conclusion.</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p><u>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</u> Yes, I believe that the draft Bill seems reasonable for appealing to most, as it allows for same sex marriages to be conducted however also protects the beliefs of religious organisations who have no obligation to be involved should they not wish. There are no points raised that I have any issue with.</p> <p><u>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</u> The main opposing force to same sex marriage is religion. I believe that if someone loves God then they should recognise that everyone is part of his creation, God is omnibenevolent. God gave us the freedom to make our own choices, if a person has chosen to share their love with someone else for the rest of their life, I believe that should be allowed to be recognised by the contract of marriage regardless of sexuality.</p>
Alex Eaton	<p>I would like to voice my personal overwhelming support for this amendment - a sentiment that I know is shared by a very large proportion of the Island's residents.</p> <p>I couldn't agree more with the chief minister's words - if the Island is to be seen as a progressive first century nation, tackling issues such as equality are essential.</p>
Elliot Booth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I absolutely, wholeheartedly agree. 2. Whilst I agree that Same Sex Marriage is an important right for members of the LGBT Community, I do not agree that the Isle of Man should be bound in any way by the UK Government's horrific approach to economic policy (particularly the appalling dismantling of the welfare state, which the Island has started to copy). We ought to be leading the fight against wealth inequality and social justice not following the UK's detrimental politics. 3. As long as pension entitlement remains totally in place for same sex couples, I have no issues with the draft bill. 4. I am a gay Manx man who currently lives and studies in the UK. I was moved to tears when the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act was given Royal Assent, and I want that for the many LGBTQ+ people who (or want to) live and work on the Isle of Man. <p>I want LGBTQ+ people to be allowed the option to settle long term on the Isle of Man and have their marriages recognised. I want our tourism industry to be rejuvenated, promoting the Island as a beautiful place to have your wedding. One day, if I return to the Island with my husband, I want my marriage to him to be recognised.</p> <p>Whilst we're on the subject of gay rights, I also suggest you immediately remove the discriminatory blanket ban on donations of gay men's blood. It is an archaic policy that reinforces stereotypes about gay men as the carriers of disease.</p>
Andrew Faragher	<p>Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? I strongly agree that same sex couples should be able to get married.</p> <p>If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? I would have no problem with basing Island legislation for same sex marriage on that of the parts of the United Kingdom which allows same sex marriage.</p> <p>Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? Biological sex is fairly superficial, perhaps the bill could be based on gender instead, thus making the language used more inclusive for transgender individuals.</p> <p>Do you have any other relevant comments? I am so pleased that this legislation has been proposed, and I really hope it gets brought in. People attracted to the same gender do not choose to be that way, so it is arbitrary and wrong to deny them the rights that people attracted to the opposite gender benefit from. To the decision makers - I implore you to think about the fact that we currently live in a society that tells certain people that they are lesser than others. That is not right, and it is not what the Isle of Man should be. This is a fantastic opportunity to change that, improving the lives of many, whilst also sending the world a message that we are an inclusive, forward-thinking nation. I eagerly await the results of this consultation.</p>
Samantha Kelly	<p>I'm writing in favour of the marriage equality law to be passed on the Isle of Man.</p> <p>Manx born I have lived on the island openly gay for 11 years and have not had one bit of negativity. The island is 'behind the times' and would not be seen favourable as a sociable nation if the law simply was not passed.</p>

Respondent	Comments
Mike Seed	Many thanks for giving me the opportunity to send in an opinion on this one. Mine is a "Yes". We live in a liberal, democratic society. Legislation must reflect and serve that liberal, democratic society.
Faye Hannay	Question 1: I agree that same sex couples should be able to get married. Question 2: I have no comments on the general principle of basing the island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom. Question 3: I do not agree with the statement below, I believe that adultery is adultery no matter if the person is of opposing gender or not. 23. 'Schedule 2 Part 3 makes consequential amendments in the law relating to divorce and annulment of marriage (including making it clear that adultery can only occur between persons of opposing gender). The island needs allow those of the same sex to marry, not because the rest of the world are doing so, but because it is what the majority of our population believe in. I believe we are all equal and should all be treated equally.
Tim Norton	Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? Answer: Agree. Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? Answer: No. Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? Answer: No. Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? Answer: No.
Mrs Jane Rainey	I fully support marriage equality. However, I am concerned that this is being treated as a separate issue to equality of human rights. Why can't equality for all be included in one bill? Why do we need to parcel up the disabled, the homosexual community as different from the rest of the people of the Island? Surely the very nature of equality is inclusive? One bill should cover all equality issues. A referendum on the subject is a total waste of funds, human rights are paramount, why should the prejudice of individuals be allowed to affect human rights? I also wish to point out the the Manx Rainbow Association do not represent the gay community on the Island. They have been steeped in controversy for almost a year now and are seen as a spent force of, mainly heterosexual, friends and family who are now little more than a social group who have the odd night out. Senior members of the gay community who were on the Island in the late 1980's and early 1990's should form a caucus of consultants. Mr. Bell knows these people and they, if anyone, should be consulted by the government I feel I speak for the majority of residents, the normally silent majority, the married, liberal majority of Islanders who rarely have a say in government policy. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any points you wish me to clarify.
David Bellamy	Question 1 - Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? I strongly believe that same sex couples should be given an identical right to marriage as opposite sex couples currently enjoy in the Isle of Man. Current Manx legislation essentially discriminates against same sex couples by providing that some citizens have more rights than others based on whom they love. Furthermore I believe that legislation to such effect should be forthcoming given that the current absence of same sex marriage directly affects citizens and families of the Isle of Man today. Finally it should be noted that same sex marriage is rapidly becoming the norm across the Western world, especially in the British Isles. The recent referendum in the Republic of Ireland clearly shows that the majority of today's society in this region believe that marriage is a right that governments should make available to all. Question 2 - If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's

Respondent	Comments
	<p>legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? This is a sensible approach to take, however I do not believe that the Church of England should be expressly prohibited by Isle of Man legislation from performing same sex marriages as is the case in the law in England and Wales. There are enough protections elsewhere within the draft Bill which would allow the Church of England to opt-out on its own accord should it so wish. In my view this is a matter for the Church of England to decide and not the Isle of Man legislature to dictate.</p> <p>Question 3 - Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? The Bill should better address what would otherwise become an anomaly as seen in the UK: civil partnerships. It is my view that if this Bill is passed then civil partnerships should either be opened to all couples, regardless of sexual orientation, or that their ability to be enacted should be removed from all, thereby guaranteeing true equality. In the UK we can see a situation whereby same sex couples now have more rights than opposite sex couples by having two forms of union available to them. My views are therefore aligned with 'Option 2' as stated in the Draft Bill Impact Assessment, 'Allow civil marriage ceremonies for same sex couples and remove provision for new registrations of civil partnerships.'</p> <p>Finally express provision should be made in section 27A of the Civil Partnership Act 2011 that an initial civil partnership (dated before the introduction of same sex marriage) and its subsequent conversion into a marriage should cost no more in financial terms than entering directly into a marriage.</p> <p>Question 4 - Do you have any other relevant comments? It is pleasing to see this draft bill open to consultation relatively soon after such legislation has been introduced in both England & Wales and Scotland, and also so soon after the referendum in the Republic of Ireland. Sadly the Isle of Man has both a mixed record and poor reputation on human rights, however I believe that this bill would finally draw a line under the Island's past and complete a long journey to equality for all under the law that commenced in 1881 with the right of some women to vote. I hope that this legislation is promptly passed, not just because it is the right thing to do but also because it will make a difference to Manxmen and Manxwomen who desire to be treated equally and to be able to show their love for each other today.</p>
Hazel Kirby	<p>I would like to express my view is that of support for those wishing to enter a same sex marriage. As with any marriage such a commitment should be entered with a view to a lifelong marital commitment and mutual respect for each other.</p>
Rachel Goldsmith	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? YES. My partner and I are to be married on the 2nd January 2016 in The Lake District in England.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? NO. More than happy to adopt the UK approach and allow religious organisations to opt out if they so wish.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? NO.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comment YES. I fully support the introduction of same sex marriage and hope the Isle of Man adopts this legislation so that my marriage to my partner becomes legally recognised as a marriage here rather than just a civil partnership. The Isle of Man has come a long way since homosexuality was decriminalised and this is the last, essential step that must be taken.</p>
Lynda Sullivan	<p>I had intended to look at the consultation in depth but it is too onerous to plough through so my only comments are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why were people in the health and social care arena not part of the consultees list? No doubt they have seen the fall out of relationships discriminated against. 2. 1.9 The Church of England is not the only religion! 3. I very much agree that same sex relationships ought to be allowed to marry in law the same as any heterosexual couple. 4. We are all souls regardless of gender therefore fairness and equality must be adhered to. I am not gay but I hate any form of injustice.
Kezia Craine	<p>I am emailing with my 100% support of this bill being passed. I believe after the mass majority vote in countries such as Ireland and the USA, we (the people and government of the Isle of Man) must keep up to date with human rights and equality.</p>

Respondent	Comments
	I myself had a civil partnership ceremony with my partner on the Island in 2012. We would both love to be married so there will be absolutely no question of what happens to my estate and myself should anything ever happen and vice versa. I feel it would also give us a sense of completeness and equality of our relationship to those of heterosexual, married friends and family.
Becky Owen	I wanted to email just to air my view on Same sex marriage. I 100 percent back it. as a gay woman living on the island if the bill was put through and made legal it would mean I could marry the one i love regardless of that fact they are the same sex. it's all about equal rights for all. words cannot express how wonderful it would be if one day myself and others can say they got married. it would be such a leap in the right direction for the island and showing that we are not segregating the gay community. love is love no matter what sexual orientation you are. I feel very strongly for this as one day I would like to get married to the one I love not just have a civil partnership.
Dr Paul McIntyre	I am writing to show my support for same sex marriages in the Isle of Man. As a junior doctor, I am an advocate for equal rights for all of our residents, regardless of race, gender, religion or sexual preference. I believe that giving people the freedom to marry whomever they choose, man or woman, will not only emancipate those people, it will show political leaders around the globe that we truly support freedom of choice for all of our residents. I look forward to seeing how this progresses and truly hope that same sex couples will be free to marry, in the same way that we treat our patients equally in our hospital.
Dr Brenden Canavan	I am just writing a short response to the current consultation document put forward by the island government regarding gay marriage. This is an excellent and long overdue proposal. Marriage equality will finalise the long road towards increasing equality and human rights in our island, and it will do much to improve the island's image overseas – something which in turn could help our wider political representation, as it would assist the tourism industry. Tourism would for instance benefit from the potential to build upon marriage and honeymoon tourism, and the gay tourism market more generally – we have the perfect brand name after all! Lastly, marriage equality would improve the lives of gay people, many of whom still face discrimination and abuse, self-loathing, and other problems. It is only 10 years since I was at school on the island and teachers would shout homophobic abuse across playing fields. Coming from the UK at the time I was surprised by how much of a step back this was. Marriage equality would be a further indication that such behaviour is unacceptable and help to support the confidence and representation of some of the most vulnerable and valuable members of our society. The island has a wealth of pioneering democratic tradition to be proud of. Sadly this area is not one of them. This policy is late, but better than never. I fully support the proposed change and pass on my gratitude to all those involved.
Mark Byrne	I am writing to confirm that I fully support this Bill. It is wrong for people to be discriminated against on the basis of who they love. I have members of my wider family that would be grateful to take advantage of the opportunity provided by this Bill should it be enacted. I have copied in my immediate family who I hope will write to you in similar terms.
Sally Hogarth	I am writing to express my support of allowing same sex couples to get married in the Isle of Man and on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill. We need to make this change asap, frankly it's embarrassing that we have not done so already.
Ian Cook Clerk, Isle of Man Quaker Meeting	I write as Clerk of the Isle of Man Quaker Meeting. This recognition of Same Sex Marriage is very welcome to Quakers. You are correct in saying that public opinion has moved on rapidly in the last few years. For some 50 years now Quakers have been in the vanguard (in the UK) of accepting and normalising same sex relationships often against legal and public opinion. But in 2009 even the Quaker secretariat was surprised when the membership in open meeting clearly and unequivocally supported same sex marriage and mandated the secretariat to publicise the decision. More recently the referendum in Ireland clearly showed the favourable opinion of what had been seen as a quite conservative populace. I am pleased that the proposed legislation leaves no room for Civil Registrars to object to performing such a marriage. It is fair to allow Churches (I use the term broadly) to object, though personally I believe their objections to be rooted in unthinking and uncritical theology, but these marriages are part of a civil registrars duty to support the state.

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Thank you for noting Quakers in your explanation of the legislation, I think it unlikely that we will be in a position to request a licence for a Meeting House in the foreseeable future.</p> <p>Finally, I personally am very pleased to see this proposal being made and entirely agree that it is only normal for a modern state.</p>
Eddie Moore	<p>Just a relatively quick couple (or so) of questions I think.</p> <p>Could you explain why this 'consultation' is not available online??</p> <p>Could you explain why the questions published do not include questions as to the sexuality of the respondent whereas most 'consultations' want to know ethnicity, age, gender, marital status, date of birth etc etc. I would have thought the sexual orientation of a respondent to be key to determining the final overall results.</p> <p>So far as I can see from the Government website all other consultations and questions related to the same are available to answer online whereas this particular one is not.</p> <p>Is there a hidden agenda to limit the number of responses received?? I totally understand that not all people have access to the internet but surely the 'consultations' should be available to all to respond to and not be exclusive to those who have to write in or email. This seems contrary to other 'consultations' and I would like to ask why??</p> <p>Will all comments received be published??</p> <p>If not why not??</p> <p>If the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and associated regulations/guidelines come into effect – will it be possible to request the information regarding the 'consultation' be made available or will it fall outside the FOI Act timelines??</p> <p>If the results of the 'consultation' are against the proposals will the proposer of the Legislation withdraw the Bill (not sure if this is the correct wording)??</p> <p>Just for absolute clarity – I am in favour of the proposals but would not like it to be driven through on the whim of individuals on the basis of general political correctness without proper and thorough consultation and I do not believe this 'consultation' is either fair, transparent, available to all, fair or equitable and would like your views as to all of the above.</p> <p>Incidentally – I am guessing the email addresses but would like to ask why there is not an email all option for all Tynwald members available somewhere. I am happy to be corrected if this is available but would like to ask where are they published on the gov.im website???</p>
Name withheld as requested (Supportive - 1)	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>I agree that same sex couples should be able to get married. I believe that it is important to allow same sex couples in stable and committed relationships to be able to marry and to enable the state to recognise such marriages. Whilst the introduction of civil partnership legislation in 2011 was an important step, I believe that the legalisation of same sex marriage is a key milestone towards the Isle of Man being recognised as a modern and inclusive nation. I believe that the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill will ultimately reinforce the institution of marriage, benefit social cohesion within our community and should also help to reduce discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the long term.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>I believe that the decision to base the Island's same sex marriage legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom is a sensible one under the circumstances. The apparent similarities between the existing legal frameworks for marriage in the Isle of Man and the United Kingdom mean that there is no real need to develop bespoke legislation for the Isle of Man. This ultimately reduces the cost of the proposal and enables parity of approach with the United Kingdom, with which the Island continues to enjoy close cultural and social ties.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>I have no comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in the consultation document.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>I believe that the protections put in place for religious organisations and their representatives are sufficient to prevent such persons from being compelled to participate in same sex marriages if they do not wish to do so. I agree with the permissive way in which the legislation is drafted, thereby allowing religious organisations and their representatives to opt in or opt out of performing same sex marriages. This preserves the separation of church and state, which is consistent with democratic values, whilst recognising particular sensitivities to same sex marriage within religious communities.</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>I would be extremely proud to see the Isle of Man Government pass the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill and am grateful to the Government for recognising the importance of this issue to the local population.</p> <p>I am happy to discuss my responses if required.</p>
<p>Hon Phil Gawne MHK (in response to Opposed – 1)</p>	<p>Thanks for copying me in.</p> <p>I disagree with you but would always fight for your right to express your point of view and don't for one moment see you as medieval <i>(In addition, in response to Opposed – 1's subsequent comment: I would hope though that you would agree with my response to Question 2, Minister Gawne stated: Yes of course. Apologies for not clarifying that.)</i></p>
<p>Sinéad Allen</p>	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? I am in complete agreement that same sex couples should be able to get married.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? I think that the UK's legislation (excluding Northern Ireland) is a relatively strong piece of legislation and our own should be based upon it. It is clearer than US legislation, which has had various issues which I've highlighted below.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? Generally it is a good piece of legislation. However, I would recommend that there is greater clarity regarding the idea of 'compulsion'. There have been various problems in the US and Northern Ireland with cases regarding LGBT* legislation such as that of Kim Davis and the 'Wedding Cake' row. The Isle of Man government needs to learn from other nations' mistakes, making sure there is a clear line between avoiding compulsion and freedom of speech taking a step too far and allowing discrimination.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? Without the legalisation of same-sex marriage, LGBT* people will never be equal to cisgender, heterosexual couples. I would like to add that this is just the starting point, the island still has many LGBT issues that need addressing, especially within education. This piece of legislation is everything to me. In the future, I would love to be engaged to someone of the same-sex and be able to marry them where I grew up. I hope that the Church of England soon follows, to be equal by law and in the eyes of my church would be life-changing.</p>
<p>Hazel Hannan</p>	<p>Q 1, Agree, it should be in place to allow choice for same sex couples BUT regarding equality then civil partnerships must also be made available to male and female couples.</p> <p>Q 2, No comment</p> <p>Q 3 It seems to do what is proposed</p> <p>Q 4 Although I have been in good marriage for 40 years I consider marriage to be an outdated institution in relation to equal rights and Human Rights because there is nothing equal in male/female marriage, because marriage was grasped by the church to guarantee that the male had power over the female. So when bringing in this legislation there needs to be a provision to provide equality by also bringing in choice for male/ female relationships and to allow civil partnerships for them as well.</p>
<p>David Carter</p>	<p>Same sex couples should enjoy the same rights as heterosexual couples. The rights of religious minorities can be respected by not forcing them to officiate at same sex ceremonies, but the state should provide for such ceremonies to ensure proper equality in the eyes of the law.</p>
<p>Name withheld as requested (Supportive – 2)</p>	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? I AGREE</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? I FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH UK PRINCIPLE</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other comments?</p>
<p>Hazel Faraghar</p>	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? Agree</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Why not? IOM Government copies everything else the UK does, so why not their legislation on this?</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? No</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? No</p>
George Meddes	Please don't let us be compared to Northern Ireland where a vocal minority has used technicalities to block marriage.
Vicky Christian	<p>Qu. 1 I agree that same sex couples should be able to get married.</p> <p>Qu. 4 Civil Partnership and Marriage should be available to all couples, whatever their gender.</p> <p>As a matter of principle, there is no reason why couples of the same gender should be treated less favourably than couples with male and female partners.</p> <p>If the Isle of Man wishes to be judged on the international stage, then this legislation must go through.</p> <p>To me, it is a clear cut decision, to allow all couples to marry. Objectors (and I fear there will be some) should be reassured that nobody will be forcing them to marry a person of the same gender as themselves. This is a purely personal matter, and does not impinge on anyone else's human rights.</p>
Nik Crellin	<p>I am writing to support same sex Marriage on the Island.</p> <p>100% believe in equity for all</p>
Paul Ginns	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to make comments with regard to the Same Sex Marriage Bill.</p> <p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? <i>I strongly agree</i></p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? <i>No. Provided that there are adequate safeguards to ensure this Bill applies to residents of the Isle of Man only.</i></p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? <i>YES. Whilst it may be seen by many as an extension of the Equality Act, I believe it should stand as a separate Bill.</i></p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? <i>YES, believe the opt –out for religious organisations should apply strictly to those organisations which do not receive any public funding. This should also apply to those religious organisations who receive funding towards their buildings either for maintenance, capital expenditure or reduction/abolition of rates charges. There is a principle here which is worth further consideration. If the Government (The local population) is to subsidise a religious organisation then that organisation should abide by and comply with all aspects of law.</i></p> <p><i>Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.</i></p>
Mrs Tristan Rudd	<p>Firstly, thank you so much for giving the public the opportunity to provide feedback on this bill. As a proud Manx person (born in "The Jane"!) currently living and working in the UK I often talk about the beauty of my home. I'm less proud of our history in recognising and responding to social equality issues. The cultural diversity on the Island, although improving, is still something that I find shameful. The adoption of this bill into law, to me, is common sense. To not give two same sex persons who commit to a life together the same rights as male/female couples is simply wrong in this day and age.</p> <p>I understand that there are religious reservations by some and to these people I would say that their religious texts were written based on the best wisdom at the time. The natural state for every living thing on this planet is to learn and evolve. The basic ethos of tolerance, respect, love and honour hasn't changed. Our laws should be based on the best current wisdom, not refer back to centuries old dogma, misunderstanding and intolerance. Why should a parent have to tell their gay son or daughter that it's ok, they are still loved and cherished by their parents but their country is embarrassed and intolerant of them so they can't marry their chosen life partner? That is the message that not passing this bill sends.</p> <p>I had my (heterosexual) wedding the UK much to the disappointment of my new in-laws but how could I have brought my gay (female) married friends home? They would have been so uncomfortable. Let's be clear, life is sometimes difficult for them in the UK but at least the law recognises and supports them and their son.</p>

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	<p>I remember life on the Island before homosexuality was legalised and the culture of bullying and hidden violence that prevailed. Attending Nobles with friends who were beaten by thugs for being "different" and the police not following up because 2 men holding hands was seen as provoking behaviour so a prosecution wouldn't stick. They were apologetic but walked away. I believe that things are improving and we continue this progressive stance with this bill.</p> <p>All people should have the opportunity to live their lives with respect and dignity. This is what I was taught in school on the Island, this is what our laws should support.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
Adam Mister	<p>I am delighted to see the government is finally thinking about rolling out same sex marriage act.</p> <p>I think this piece of legislation, along with the equality act when it is rolled out will be a fantastic addition to the IOM and show that this is an island that moves with the times.</p> <p>I have been with my partner for nearly 8 years and have considered marriage, however I wanted to be married on the island I was born and live in, and where all my friends and family live. My only hope is this act is brought in swiftly. It would be great to see the commitment for government to roll this out in the next 6-12 months.</p>
Elizabeth Kewley Voirrey Kewley TUC Equality Officers.	<p>We have read and reviewed the proposed legislation relating to Marriage (Same Sex Marriage Couples) Bill, (October 2015), Cabinet Office, Isle of Man Government.</p> <p>As an organisation we, the TUC, feel that the time is right for this legislation to be introduced. In reality we have to accept that the enactment of such legislation will affect a small number of people.</p> <p>In every country where it has been introduced, or has been refused introduction, same sex marriage has been a subject for a good deal of debate. We acknowledge that there is a clear division between some people of faith, who believe that marriage can only ever be a union between a man and a woman, and others who believe that it is unfair and untenable to refuse to allow a loving same sex couple to marry each other. It is our belief that some of society's views will probably never be reconciled.</p> <p>As an organisation we wholly endorse the concept of the Island's proposed legislation.</p> <p>It should be kept in harmony with similar legislation on the same subject as the rest of our neighbours.</p>
Nicola Carine	<p>I would just like to say I absolutely support same sex marriage. My son is due to enter a civil partnership with his partner next July and I would love to be able to call it 'a marriage' by then. My partners son married his husband last month in London and what a joyous occasion it was.</p>
James Bassett	<p>I fail to understand why the government feels it necessary to hold a public consultation on such an unimportant matter. Either we are an Island of bigots who believe some people should be denied rights available to others or we aren't. Assuming our own government does not believe it's own citizens to be horrendous bigots put the bill into action, make us all equal and move on. There is nothing to see here.</p>
Stuart Hartill for Isle of Man Freethinkers	<p>Question 1: <i>Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</i></p> <p>We not only agree strongly that same sex couples should be able to get married but would add that, as a general principle, when applying to do so they should not be subject to any impediment which does not also apply equally to opposite sex couples.</p> <p>Question 2: <i>If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</i></p> <p>We are content for now to see legislation based upon the England and Wales model in order that change happens without further delay, but see the answer to Question 4 in regard to any future revision.</p> <p>Question 3: <i>Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</i></p> <p>We note that the draft bill was put together largely in the legislative drafter's spare time and would like to place on record our thanks for such selfless public service. We also regret that so much of his time and effort had to be spent ensuring a few religious bigots can continue to discriminate with a clear conscience. As fellow victims of the island's ridiculous faith-privileged system of marital apartheid we do commiserate with him.... whenever we can stop laughing.</p> <p>Question 4: <i>Do you have any other relevant comments?</i></p> <p>When (and hopefully it is 'when' and not 'if') this Bill passes, there will inevitably be a period in which both those tasked with delivering the service and</p>

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	<p>those hoping to take advantage of it need to adjust to new ways of doing things. To atheists and humanists, however this plays out in religious services it will be 'business as usual' regardless of the gender of those going through ceremonies which have no meaning, validity or interest to us. Our only concern is that the public service offered by the Registry is efficient and immediate.</p> <p>We suggest that a general 'how did we do?' type survey of all civil marriage ceremonies (rather than just same sex ceremonies) conducted in the first year would be useful. This should iron out any unforeseen issues, and also be a way of ensuring that prejudices currently safely confined to religious ceremonies cannot slip in through the back door.</p> <p>More generally, we are content for now to see legislation based upon the England and Wales model but suggest that future general marriage law revision could usefully look at Scottish marriage law – or indeed newer legislation in the Irish Republic. Were this model to be followed (in which individuals rather than buildings are registered for the conduct of marriage, according to a quota system based on known numbers of followers of various faiths and belief groups) many of the problems over use of religious buildings which had to be addressed at length might be avoided, and the general public given genuine choices which should ensure the right of all to a single, meaningful marriage ceremony.</p> <p>The current model is a disincentive to all but church marriages, in that many couples simply cannot afford to follow the obligatory registry office 'rubber stamping' with a second ceremony which has genuine meaning. As we commented in a previous consultation on marriage law, this amounts to marital apartheid, but little seems to have changed.</p> <p>Until the problem is addressed, we will continue to refer either locals or visitors with no religious belief to Scotland or the Irish Republic for a meaningful and memorable marriage ceremony. At a conservative estimate, we have done this at least once a month for the last decade, often so advising couples who expected to spend a substantial sum on the ceremony alone, not including other income (hotel stays etc.) which would be accrued from visiting guests.</p> <p>For an idea of the potential income lost to the Isle of Man, please see Scottish Government figures on the increase in all marital ceremonies since a change in the law allowing humanist marriages, and the way in which individually specific marriage ceremonies conducted by the Humanist Society of Scotland now outnumber all religious ceremonies. The change in the Irish Republic is newer, but from early reports is showing the same pattern of change, and the marketing of this change, combined with use of national beauty spots, as a tourist initiative in both countries suggests we would do well to follow rather than throw away yet another income source.</p>
Pernille Thilker	<p>As a friend of mine posted a petition opposing marriage equality on your lovely Isle of Man, specifying that people from all over the world should reply, I hereby reply!</p> <p>I strongly APPROVE of marriage equality, IT IS ABOUT TIME!</p>
Helen Ashcroft	<p>No brainier - let this act through. One world one love. We need to demonstrate that we are a progressive modern and tolerant society.</p> <p>What bothers me is that the chief minister seems to be pushing this personally significant motion through before the elections.</p> <p>What say he of drug law reform? Treating drug addicts as criminals is massively expensive and destructive to our society. Furthermore it does nothing to tackle to issue of people in our society seeking to take illegal drugs. Added to this it hands control of this huge market to a criminal underclass and finances wars and terrorism abroad as well as on our own shores. Get a grip!</p>
Ian Costain	<p>Having read the consultation documents of the Government website, I write simply in order to express and record my support for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill.</p> <p>Over the years, I have had many gay and lesbian friends and acquaintances, as well as gay and lesbian family members.</p> <p>It is in the interest of all of us, and society at large, that the advances in equality proposed by the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) bill should be approved by Tynwald.</p>
Samuel Hudson – Branch Secretary (Isle of Man Branch on behalf of UNISON	<p>Consultation on Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill 2015</p> <p>UNISON response</p> <p>1 About UNISON</p> <p>1.1 UNISON is the UK's largest public service union with more than 1.3 million members. Our members are people working in the public services, for private contractors providing public services and in the essential utilities. They include frontline staff and managers, working full or part time in local authorities, the NHS, the police service, colleges and schools, the electricity, gas and water industries, transport and the voluntary sector. Over 74% of</p>

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	<p>our members are women; many are low paid or work part time.</p> <p>1.2 UNISON has about 300 full members in the Isle of Man.</p> <p>1.3 The issue of marriage equality is important to UNISON, impacting on our members at work and on society as a whole.</p> <p>1.3 UNISON has a long and proud history of work for sexual orientation and transgender equality. A significant proportion of our members are themselves lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and there is a very active group of LGBT members organised within the union. All our members deliver public services to LGBT people.</p> <p>1.4 UNISON is the trade union for registrars: our members conduct civil partnerships and marriages.</p> <p>2 Summary of submission</p> <p>2.1 UNISON very much welcomes the publication of this draft bill and progress towards same sex marriage in the Isle of Man.</p> <p>2.2 UNISON is strongly in favour of full equality in marriage. It matters for the individuals concerned but it has far wider ramifications in the message it sends about LGBT equality.</p> <p>2.3 UNISON supports the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in other parts of the UK.</p> <p>2.4 UNISON welcomes the clear statement there will be no opt-out for civil registrars.</p> <p>2.5 UNISON has two outstanding concerns about existing UK same sex marriage legislation: first that civil partnership is only open to same sex couples and secondly that it has not extended full equality in surviving partner pensions.</p> <p>3 Context</p> <p>3.1 UNISON is a trade union committed to equality for all: we aim to combat all forms of prejudice and discrimination. Although we have made progress, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people continue to experience widespread prejudice and discrimination, personal and institutional.</p> <p>3.2 The current bar on marriage for same sex couples in the Isle of Man is a cornerstone of institutional discrimination. It perpetuates homophobia, reinforcing the notion that same sex couples are not a real family and are inferior. Separate is definitely not equal. It impacts on the individual partners, on other dependent family members and sends ripples out through society.</p> <p>3.3 Further, there is an urgent need to right the wrong of transgender people in the Isle of Man having to end their marriage or civil partnership in order to gain gender recognition.</p> <p>3.4 Such concerns as were expressed about the introduction of same sex marriage in England, Wales and Scotland have not been realised. On the contrary, it has proved a very positive step that has strengthened society. As the forward by the Chief Minister eloquently says, the passing of this legislation in the Isle of Man 'would send a very strong message to the world that the Island is a modern and inclusive nation'.</p> <p>4. Survivor pensions</p> <p>4.1 For many years, UNISON has called for the right for workers to leave survivor pension benefits to a same sex partner.</p> <p>4.2 Although this was resolved for future couples by the introduction of civil partnership, a significant number of people in civil partnerships get much smaller survivor's pensions than they would if they were in a mixed sex marriage. This is because as a statutory minimum, civil partner survivor's pension benefits only accrue on service since civil partnership came into force.</p> <p>4.3 We were concerned that the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act for England and Wales extended the exception to married same-sex couples.</p> <p>4.4 We lobbied for a successful amendment to that legislation that required the Westminster government to look into this injustice.</p> <p>4.5 The findings of the resulting government review were published over a year ago, in June 2014, and we strongly believe they showed that full equality is affordable as well as fair.</p> <p>4.6 The cost to pension schemes would not be burdensome as it affects a small and diminishing number of people. The cost is too small to move an actuarial assumption. There is no distinction made between spouses and civil partners in the way valuations are usually constructed. Currently a civil partner's dependant's pension on pre 2005 service is costed even if a scheme does not provide that benefit.</p> <p>4.7 But although there is little or no impact on schemes, the impact on the individuals concerned is substantial.</p> <p>4.8 We urge the Council of Ministers and Tynwald to consider these issues.</p> <p>5 Civil partnership</p> <p>5.1 UNISON believes that civil partnership should be opened up to opposite sex couples. This would end the stigma of an institution for same sex</p>

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	<p>couples only; remove the fact that declaring a civil partnership is effectively a declaration of sexual orientation; resolve the problem that a transgender person in a civil partnership would still have to end their civil partnership in order to seek full gender recognition if they do not wish to convert their civil partnership into a marriage; and meet the needs of opposite sex couples who want to register their relationship but do not want a marriage.</p> <p>5.2 However, UNISON understands the principle of basing the Island’s legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the UK.</p> <p>6 Civil registrars</p> <p>6.1 UNISON members deliver public services – including the public service of registering civil marriages and civil partnerships.</p> <p>6.2 We are aware that some have called for an opt-out for registrars who do not wish to conduct same sex marriages because of their personal beliefs.</p> <p>6.3 UNISON strongly believes that there should be no such opt-out in the Bill and welcomes the clarity with which this is set out in the consultation. Registration of lawful marriages is a public function that must be delivered without discrimination against people with a protected characteristic.</p> <p>6.5 A personal belief about same sex marriage cannot justify refusing to provide a public service.</p> <p>6.4 The experience of our civil registrar members is that such a refusal not only impacts on those wishing to register a civil partnership. It impacts on the dignity at work of other civil registrars – including those who are themselves LGBT. It is incompatible with the public service aims of equality and non-discrimination.</p> <p>6.6 UNISON welcomed the European Court of Human Rights ruling in <i>Eweida and Others v. United Kingdom</i> that settled this matter – that preventing sexual orientation discrimination is an important and legitimate purpose that justifies restrictions on expression of religious belief.</p> <p>7 Conclusion</p> <p>7.1 The introduction of same sex marriage is an important step forwards in equality for LGBT people and in combating the homophobic, biphobic and transphobic prejudice and discrimination which continue to blight the lives of individuals and damage our society.</p> <p>7.2 UNISON welcomes the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill 2015 and looks forward to its passage into law.</p> <p>Carola Towle National officer, LGBT equality UNISON</p>
Lynette Byrne	<p>I am writing to confirm that I fully support this Bill. It is wrong for people to be discriminated against on the basis of who they love. Particularly as the current discrimination - to my mind - is based on the interpretative dogma of an increasingly less relevant section of society. Where is the marriage ceremony in the Bible? It's time for those who profess to be Christian started being more compassionate and tolerant.</p>
Sue Webster	<p>Question 1 : I agree that same sex couples should be able to marry on the Isle of Man</p> <p>Question 2 : I do not have any concerns about basing the legislation on the UK legislation</p> <p>Question 3 : I am happy with the draft document in general. Don't understand why CofE gets a special mention in exemptions - surely all places of worship should be able to exclude themselves (I do think it should be 'you are in unless you say you want out') - I assume this is some sort of throwback. As should non religious marriage celebrants.</p> <p>In order to avoid the Kim Davis fiasco, all government employees able to perform marriage ceremonies should have it in their contract that they have to perform all marriages.</p> <p>Question 4 : Not sure if I would say relevant, but I do think it is important that we are not seen to be segregating a section of our society and their families. This will help to reduce the perception that discrimination and hateful comment and actions are acceptable.</p> <p>I am not comfortable that there is legal discrimination against some members of our society and that they are excluded from the rights and obligations that the majority of us have available and probably take for granted.</p>
Joe Mawson	<p>I am just emailing in regards to the public consultation on the legislation for Same Sex Marriage here in the Isle of Man. See my comment regarding the matter below.</p> <p>Coming from somebody who is not a homosexual, I believe that this is something that should be legalised.</p> <p>As long as there are two consenting adults who love each other, then there should be no issues with them getting married regardless of gender. I think we need to move forward into the 21st century, there is no valid reason in my mind why any person would have such a big issue with this they would</p>

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	<p>not want marriage to be available to people of the same gender. Thank you for taking the time to see what I have to say, I hope my comment helps in making Same Sex Marriage on the island legal.</p>
Simon Nicholson	<p>I thoroughly endorse the move to allow same-sex marriage and enshrine it in law as a matter of the advancement of basic human rights. Your consultation was brought to my attention by a Christian blogger who could not understand how somebody like myself -- law-abiding, tax-paying, demanding of decency in public life -- could not also be a Christian, and demand a Christian underpinning of the legal system. Marriage was a Christian institution, I was told, and I had no right to name my legal partner if they didn't meet the blogger's religious approval. If this is what you have to overcome, I would hope the way forward is obvious.</p> <p>I am not a Christian, despite my Christian upbringing. But I am a citizen, bound to my nation by an implied social contract, and have always taken that responsibility very seriously. All I seek is that my nation, in return, regards me equally in its own commitment to upholding that contract; that it does not treat me unfairly, through prejudice or by preference to others. There is no religion and no belief that has any historic monopoly on the institution of one person marrying another in the eyes of their community.</p> <p>I do not pretend this is a simple discussion, which is why thinkers and philosophers have wrestled with the distinction of the religious and the secular for centuries. I may even have the theology to challenge my blogger on interpretations of scripture. But if marriage in a multitude of belief systems is to be recognised legally (are Hindus, Sikhs or Muslims not considered married by my blogger?) then it is by definition a secular matter, and demands secular solutions. As such it is inevitable that these will not please all, but if the choice is between two people who love each other being refused the right to marry, or my blogger being offended that others of whom he disapproves have somehow corrupted the sanctity of his own marriage by following their own hearts, then I would hope that the way forward is once again obvious.</p> <p>My name is Simon and my partner is Mary. In England, my niece will marry her long-term lesbian partner and we will be attending the ceremony with friends and family. There is nothing fake or second-rate about their relationship, and Mary and I are no more likely to have children than they are. This is not about moving with the times, but simply accepting that our society has been wrong in the past and is moving towards the truth about how people live their lives. It is long overdue.</p>
Carole Hollis	<p>I would just like to add a comment that I am strongly in favour of the bill to allow same sex marriage; it is important in an inclusive society to allow all our people to be treated in the same way.</p> <p>I would like to see the IoM join the world community, and not become an isolated backwater with out-dated laws. We should treat all of our people with respect, and I could see no sensible reason not to allow this.</p>
Andrew Dixon	<p>Comments on Marriage Act (1984) Amendment as it would appear in the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill 2015.</p> <p>Q.1. Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>I agree wholeheartedly that same sex couples should be able to get married. I commend the Committee for addressing the ongoing harm that is being suffered by some of our Citizens who are currently being denied equal treatment before the law, and those Citizens who have family and friends who cannot enjoy the same privileges of being married to the person they love as they do.</p> <p>Why do I agree?</p> <p>Other than the complying with articles 12 and 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights ('Right to Marry' and 'Prohibition from Discrimination') [ECHR], and acknowledging that any society that treats its Citizens differently based solely on who they love is failing to fulfil its primary role of protecting its Citizens from harm, I would also like to add that an Equality Act which does not recognise marriage equality within the protected characteristic of 'marriage' is flawed and would therefore require amending.</p> <p>The Island has yet to pass an Equality Act.</p> <p>Laws should not be passed that, knowingly, require amending:</p> <p>In my submission to the Equality Bill Consultation (November 26th 2014) I argued there that the Committee should enact legislation covered by this Marriage Act Amendment before it should proceed with the Equality Bill:</p> <p>"If 'equality', as related to this Bill, is defined as treating each person as having an equal opportunity to a respectful and dignified treatment by the State then I hold that the Bill, as presented, does not pass this basic test. Why? Because as this Bill stands there is no recognition of the equal treatment with regards to marriage for those who are homosexual (a term I use to include both gay and lesbian couples) or where one, or both, people express a</p>

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	<p>gender different to that assigned to them at their birth.” [Responses: p.83]</p> <p>Therefore, the Island must pass the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act before it passes an Equality Act. The case for an Equality Act has been made following a previous consultation. The balance of the amendments that follow Section 1 sub-section 1 (a) rely upon this crucial change, and, in my understanding, relate to procedural matters and do not concern me in particular.</p> <p>Q.2. If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island’s legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>I concur with the comment in the Consultation document: “1.9 The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill mirrors, with necessary adjustments to reflect certain differences in the law of the Island, the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 (of Parliament) which applies to England and Wales. This approach was taken as it was considered to be quickest and most appropriate way forward. It recognises the similarities of the legal systems of the Island and of England and Wales and also the status of the Church of England in the Isle of Man.” [Consultation]</p> <p>The Bill as presented here, would, I believe, comply with the Human Rights Act 2001, especially clause 12.</p> <p>Q.3. Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>Reference in Part 1. 4A to the ...<i>Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Act 2016</i> [Should this date be 2015?]</p> <p>Other than this query, and to welcome its introduction as soon as possible, no further comments on the draft.</p> <p>Q.4. Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>If the primary role of the State is to protect its Citizens from harm, then, by amending the Marriage Act 1984, (by removing the impediment of not being the same gender) the Committee would be fulfilling its role in protecting the Island’s Citizens from further harm.</p> <p>The claim that others could somehow be harmed in a greater (or indeed, any) way by allowing other consenting, adult, couples to marry, should not, I believe, be seriously entertained by a liberal democracy in the 21st Century.</p> <p>Tragically, however, there are countless examples of people choosing to end their lives as a result of persecution, discrimination and the attitudes of those in our society who choose to express, often vociferously, their deeply held beliefs - I am not aware of any examples of the reverse of this. I am not aware of anyone hanging themselves because a couple of strangers, of the same sex, got married.</p> <p>I would like to take this opportunity to add one more counter-argument to those I raised in the Equality Bill Consultation (‘Civil Partnerships and Marriage are synonymous, so no change is required’, that ‘Marriage’ cannot be redefined and thirdly, that ‘granting marriage equality to all consenting adult couples would somehow cause the destruction of marriage’ [Responses pp.84-86]) namely, I would like to argue against those who claim (in the Responses to the Equality Bill Consultation and other forums) “That homosexuality maybe/is a personal choice therefore the Government should be neutral in supporting the preferences of its Citizens by not holding a view on the <i>common good</i>”</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt; a person’s sexual orientation is fundamental to who they are - if you doubt this then try changing your sexuality, or answer the question “when did you choose your sexuality?” A person does, however, choose to be a bigot.</p> <p>Those demanding special treatment for themselves, so that their deeply held personal beliefs can be protected from criticism (or legal action) by others, have yet, I believe, to demonstrate why?</p> <p>The distinction between ‘harm’ and ‘offense’ lies in that a person has no choice when they are harmed, but chooses to be offended. A reasonable person can be expected to predict when the former occurs, an unreasonable person can claim the latter for any idea that pops into their head!</p> <p>A person’s sexuality is not their choice, it is an integral part of who they are. However, a person may choose to suppress their sexuality in public (and indeed in private). Therefore, if these people have lived their entire lives in this manner, suppressing their true identity, they may think we are all doing so as well; they may genuinely believe we are all able to choose our sexuality in order to conform to peer pressure, or the edicts of a religious leader - they are, I believe, wrong.</p> <p><u>In conclusion:</u> This amendment as proposed removes the impediment to marriage for those of the same gender, thereby granting marriage equality for all, which</p>

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	<p>removes a harm and promotes a sense of equality and fairness. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act would also pave the way for an Equality Act that extends the protected characteristic of 'Marriage' to all consenting, adult, couples.</p> <p>I wholeheartedly support this amendment and trust the Committee will see fit to approve the Bill for debate in Tynwald.</p> <p>Thank you for enabling me to be a part of shaping our shared future, I trust that you will now take us all forward to a fairer, more equal society.</p> <p>We all deserve the freedom to flourish and now is the time for change.</p>
Dr Lily Mo	<p>In light of the public consultation document on same sex marriage, I thought it would help to set out how the Civil Partnership Act has affected my family. I also want to state how the changes supporting same sex marriage further reinforces stable family relationships.</p> <p>I write because, as one individual to other individuals, it is paramount to emphasise that this matter set before the House of Keys is not an abstract debate on principles, rather the Bill that does much to provide protections to people within our community. You may consider yourself as legislating for an ideal, but one ideal can often be seen to come into conflict with other strongly and dearly-held principles. It would be unfair and unjust to assume that all those who oppose the bill are necessarily doing so from solely Christian conviction and ideals. As a practising and active member of my local church, I can see a variety of viewpoints and in the spirit of charity would encourage all participants in the debate to look to the people sitting within and without their congregation, as well as studying their bibles.</p> <p>I would therefore ask that the House consider the bill's impact on individuals living on the island. My partner of fifteen years and I have an eight year-old son and four year old daughter. Prior to the Civil Partnership Act, we did as much as we could to protect their future. We applied successfully through the Courts for a residence order for my partner, my children's co-parent. In granting such an order, it provided limited peace of mind. Where it faltered was in the case of my untimely death as I am their biological mother. In her grief, my partner would be required to apply again to the Courts for permission to look after our children on a permanent basis. The amendments made to the Adoption Act by the Civil Partnership Act settled this anxiety.</p> <p>When we became Civil partners in 2011 we made an application for the joint adoption of our children. We underwent social worker's assessments and a panel report. We paid costly legal fees. We answered the searching questions of a Court. The protection of our children's best interests remained paramount. As it should be, political correctness was set aside to answer the fundamental question of a family court; what actions were in the best interest of the children.</p> <p>By amending the Adoption Act in particular, you allowed conscientious and caring parents to make an application during the best of times, so that should the worst of times prevail, our children could be assured of a stable loving home environment. My partner could take comfort that having already lost a loved one she was not at risk of well meaning authorities taking away her own children. In addition, her own parents had feared losing much loved grandchildren.</p> <p>For my family, the tabling of the same sex marriage bill underlines the country's commitment to support and protect ALL families. Since other jurisdictions such as the UK, the US and other EU countries have adopted same sex marriage the exclusion of our family from the social recognition that marriage affords becomes obvious. It is a subtle denigration and devaluation of our relationship. Some may argue it is in name only but demarcations subtle or otherwise can discriminate. From my perspective, it is like the government having laws insisting that I can have a hot beverage but I can drink only coffee (to borrow the bishop's analogy) no matter how much I prefer tea; tea being a hot beverage reserved solely for heterosexuals.</p> <p>Marriage within the Anglican communion remains the exclusive domain of the heterosexual couples who can also enjoy the further endorsement of a religious ceremony. Such an endorsement certain churches have the right to withhold, as it is within their dominion. As an Anglican Church goer it saddens me. But the law of the island cannot be made solely by leaders of the church. The law of the country has to be made by people who, in all conscience, truly represent the views of all their constituents. The same constituents who have voted democratically for their law-makers to make decisions based on the evidence and not on prejudice or unfounded fears.</p> <p>I don't assume to represent any other views except that of my own and that of my family. Others may feel differently. That is their right. I can only hope that before making their judgements that they seek out families similar to mine with an open mind and an open heart. We are not a stereotype, a fearsome threat, a group of militant lobbyists. We are parents dealing with the same challenging issues of other families and would ask simply to be treated equally under the law. I wish to live quietly with the peace of mind of having the full recognition of the law.</p>

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	<p>I ask the House to legislate to provide us with that peace of mind.</p> <p>My experience as a mother on the Isle of Man has been unequivocally positive. From my neighbours to health care professionals to nursery workers and the teachers in my local primary, I have found people to be caring, interested and supportive. I would hope that House would reflect our experience and reality of living here as a family.</p>
Robert Crichton	<p><i>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</i></p> <p>Agree.</p> <p><i>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</i></p> <p>Only if is possible for the Manx legislation to go further and introduce greater equality in this matter?</p> <p><i>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</i></p> <p>I was slightly concerned that religious institutions were being given some special privilege as to whether they wanted to opt-in or not. In some ways, as long as people have a choice, religious institutions are just doing themselves an injustice by not opting-in. Therefore I have no objection to those aspects of the draft.</p> <p><i>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</i></p> <p>Absolutely and without reservation I agree that same sex couples should be able to marry.</p> <p>This is simply a point of equality. The IoM has, in the past, been a leader in some aspects of equality. Why not attempt to take the lead once again? Or, in this case, catch up with countries (e.g. Eire) which you would not have expected to lead the way?</p>
Mark Owen	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill consultation document. This offers a chance to bring greater equality and fairness to the Island and I very much hope the Bill passes into law. Please see below for my full responses to the questions in the document.</p> <p><i>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</i></p> <p>ANSWER: I agree that same sex couples should be able to get married.</p> <p><i>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</i></p> <p>ANSWER: As far as I can tell as a layperson, the legislation that applies in most parts of the United Kingdom appears to have met with general approval and works well.</p> <p><i>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</i></p> <p>ANSWER: Again speaking as a layperson, having read the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill, it appears to be a well-researched and thorough piece of proposed legislation. It seems appropriate for the purpose that it is designed for.</p> <p><i>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</i></p> <p>The proposal to extend the right to marriage to same-sex couples is the right thing to do, and this is the right time to do it in the Isle of Man. It will not harm or inconvenience anybody, but will remove an inequality and bring stability and reassurance to a minority currently denied that.</p> <p>With the Republic of Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales already offering marriage equality, and plans progressing in the Channel Islands, we cannot afford to risk ending up on the wrong side of history. The Island has made huge advances over the last 25 years to shake off the backward, bigoted reputation from the bad old days, but traces of it linger in memories of people, both on and off the Island. If Tynwald was to reject this development, we risk our reputation as a modern place to do business. The disadvantages to not introducing marriage equality, and the advantages to introducing it, are economic and reputational as well as social.</p> <p>I very much hope that the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill is approved and passed into law. This is a relatively simple alteration to an existing opportunity that will extend equality, provide happiness, assist economic growth and enhance the Isle of Man's international reputation.</p>
Patrick Corrigan Head of Nations & Regions Amnesty International UK	<p>Submission to the Isle of Man government consultation on Marriage of Same Sex Couples</p> <p>Draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill</p>

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	<p>November 2015</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><i>"The exclusion of same-sex couples from the benefits and responsibilities of marriage, accordingly is not a small and tangential inconvenience...it represents a harsh if oblique statement by the law that same-sex couples are outsiders, and that their need for affirmation and protection of their intimate relations as human beings is somehow less than that of heterosexual couples...It signifies that their capacity for love, commitment and accepting responsibility is by definition less worthy of regard than of heterosexual couples."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Justice Sachs of the South African Supreme Court</p> <p style="text-align: right;">"To Have and To Hold: The Making of Same-Sex Marriage in South Africa", Gala & OUT LGBT Well-Being, 2008</p> </div> <p>Introduction</p> <p>Amnesty International UK (AI) is a national section of a global movement of over three million supporters, members and activists. We represent more than 250,000 supporters in the United Kingdom and Isle of Man, where we also have a local branch. Collectively, Amnesty International's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. Our mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending</p> <p>grave abuses of these rights. We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion.</p> <p>AI welcomes the consultation process being undertaken by the Isle of Man government in advance of making legislative provision for same-sex marriage. AI submits the following observations to this process.</p> <p>Consultation Questions</p> <p><i>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</i></p> <p>Same sex marriage is an issue in which fundamental human rights issues are at stake. The denial of equal civil recognition of same sex relationships prevent many people from enjoying a whole range of other rights. Amnesty International therefore, supports the extension of the right for all to marry that same sex marriage will bring.</p> <p>The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states: Article 16: (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.</p> <p><i>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</i></p> <p>Amnesty International commends the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the various legislation that applies in England, Wales and particularly in Scotland.</p> <p><i>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</i></p> <p>a) Same-sex marriage and mixed sex marriage should be treated the same in Isle of Man law. b) Freedom of religion is a fundamental human right and Amnesty International does not believe religious and belief celebrants should be forced to do anything they believe is incompatible with their faith. Religious and belief bodies and celebrants should not have to register civil partnerships. Equally, religious celebrants who wish to conduct ceremonies for same sex couples should have the right to do so. c) There should be no legal opt-out for civil registrars from conducting same-sex marriages. As the consultation states: Civil registrars (unlike religious and belief celebrants) are carrying out a civil function. Therefore, it is not appropriate to provide an opt-out for civil registrars based on religious or belief grounds. d) There should be no need for transgender people to divorce before obtaining a full gender recognition certificate.</p> <p><i>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? See below.</i></p> <p>AI's position in favour of marriage equality</p>

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	<p>AI opposes discrimination in civil marriage laws on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, and calls on states to recognise families of choice. AI encourages the Isle of Man government to ensure that persons are not denied the right to civil marriage on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. There are numerous social and domestic legal arguments in favour of marriage equality. However, AI confines its input here to the international human rights law dimension of this discussion.</p> <p>Rationale for AI’s position</p> <p>Denial of equal civil recognition of same-sex relationships prevents many people from enjoying other rights protected through marriage. But even if those rights were equalised under a separate regime, such as civil partnership, this is not equality. It is important to note of course that when legislating for or implementing partnership systems that are not full marriage, the result is often unequal application of rights, entitlements and duties. Separate systems are not only discriminatory, but they send a message that discrimination is permissible, since the reason for this separate approach is entrenched prejudices. Denial of an equal right to marriage stigmatises those relationships in ways that can fuel discrimination and other human rights abuses against people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.</p> <p>We can see today around the world today some of the most brutal forms that this discrimination can take, including ill-treatment and violence in the community. AI has long campaigned against persecution, violence and discrimination against people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Today we work on a wide range of issues, including opposing laws that would criminalise same sex sexual conduct; vilify lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people; restrict freedom of expression and assembly; and otherwise exclude these individuals and communities from human rights protections. Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Act is a case in point. AI has also reported on how the issue of sexuality has been manipulated for political purposes by governments across the globe, usually to deflect attention from other issues or to target a particular constituency by fuelling homophobic sentiment.</p> <p>In countries where survival for LGBTI individuals is no longer the primary issue, we fight other forms of discrimination they experience. In this context, we call for the right to marry and found a family for same-sex couples. Article 23 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) sets out the right to marry and found a family. Article 2 provides that all provisions of the ICCPR must be applied without discrimination, including on the ground of sexual orientation. As explained below, AI believes that Article 23 of the ICCPR must today be interpreted more widely than its initial 1966 formulation and permit the view that denial of entitlement to marry on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity is discrimination by today’s standards. Therefore Amnesty International opposes discrimination in civil marriage laws on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.</p> <p>What we mean by ‘sexual orientation’</p> <p>The Yogyakarta Principles were developed and adopted by a distinguished group of human rights experts in 2007 to outline the application of issues of sexual orientation and gender identity to the broad range of international human rights standards. The Yogyakarta Principles define ‘sexual orientation’ as “each person’s capacity for profound emotional, affectional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender or the same gender or more than one gender”.</p> <p>What we mean by ‘gender identity’</p> <p>The Yogyakarta Principles define ‘gender identity’ as “each person’s deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms”.</p> <p>International human rights law</p> <p>The right of adults to enter into consensual marriage is enshrined in existing international human rights standards. Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 23 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) both explicitly recognise such a right. However, the only time where the denial of a right to marriage equality for same-sex couples came before the UN Human Rights Committee, which oversees state compliance with the ICCPR, was in <i>Joslin v New Zealand</i>, where the Committee decided in 2002 that such denial was not discrimination. Noting that Article 23(2) is the only substantive provision in the Covenant which defines a right by using the term “men and women”, the Committee stated that this term “has been consistently and uniformly understood as indicating that the treaty obligation of States parties stemming from [Article 23(2)] ... is to recognise as marriage only the union between a man and a woman”. The Committee decided that a failure to allow same-sex couples to marry did not violate any provision of the ICCPR and was not a form of discrimination.</p>

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	<p>AI considers that the decision of the UN Human Rights Committee in <i>Joslin</i> did not fully follow the spirit of Article 2 of the ICCPR nor of the UDHR. Sometimes human rights bodies are reluctant to make decisions too far ahead of the prevailing attitudes and practices of member states. Non-discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation is an internationally recognised principle however, affirmed by the international community for more than a decade. The key decision in 1994 of the UN Human Rights Committee in <i>Toonen v Australia</i> creates the basis for interpreting discrimination based on sexual orientation as a violation of the prohibition against discrimination on the basis of sex. As a crosscutting principle, it applies to the full range of human rights guaranteed in international standards. AI further considers that there has been an evolving view of discrimination in the intervening 11 years since <i>Joslin</i> was decided. So the question today is whether the wording adopted in 1966 in Article 23 of the ICCPR should be reinterpreted in light of how the international community's view of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity has changed in recent decades. The right to be free from arbitrary discrimination in the enjoyment of the full range of human rights is a basic principle clearly underlined in all major human rights instruments, including Article 2 of the ICCPR. Article 26 of the ICCPR provides for equal protection before the law. AI considers that, even if Article 23(2) can only be interpreted to recognise as marriage only the union between a man and a woman, Articles 2 and 26 should today be interpreted to prohibit any arbitrary discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to marry, including on ground of sexual orientation or identity. It is of particular note that the European Court of Human Rights has more recently decided in <i>Schalk & Kopf v Austria (2010)</i> that the reference to "men and women" in Article 12 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) – wording which, incidentally, has been deleted from Article 9 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights - no longer means that "the right to marry enshrined in Article 12 must in all circumstances be limited to marriage between two persons of the opposite sex". In addition, in 2001 the Netherlands became the first country to offer full civil marriage to same sex couples and there has been a global state trend since <i>Joslin</i> was decided towards protecting the equal right of same-sex couples to have their relationships recognised in civil law.</p> <p>European Court of Human Rights</p> <p>In 2010, the European Court of Human Rights decided in <i>Schalk & Kopf v Austria</i> that it could not interpret Article 12 of the European Convention on Human Rights as requiring Council of Europe member states to allow same-sex couples to marry. However, as abovementioned, the Court decided that the reference to "men and women" in Article 12 is capable of applying to same-sex couples. In addition, the Court implied that this conclusion might change when more member states have ended the exclusion of same-sex couples from civil marriage. AI's position on this decision is that, in affording a wide margin of appreciation to states in this area, we acknowledge that the Court looks not just to what the ECHR says, but makes decisions based on the political climate and prevailing social attitudes in the member states. Where more member states are ready to take the leap to true, formal equality, the Court's jurisprudence changes.</p> <p>Definition of family</p> <p>It is important to note that even while in <i>Joslin</i> the UN Human Rights Committee declined to find in favour of marriage between individuals of the same sex, both it and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) have pushed for an expansive definition of family. The UN Human Rights Committee has noted that "the concept of the family may differ in some respects from state to state, and even from region to region within a state, and it is therefore not possible to give the concept a standard definition". The Committee on the Rights of the Child has stated that in "considering the family environment", it should reflect "different family structures arising from various cultural patterns and emerging family relationships". The CRC clarifies that "all these questions seem to place the essential value of the principle of nondiscrimination in the forefront of the general discussion [on family]".</p> <p>Conclusion – the Isle of Man and equality</p> <p>AI encourages the Isle of Man to be to the fore rather than lagging behind in the global trend toward domestic protection of the equal right of same-sex couples to have their relationships recognised in civil marriage. It should work towards a time when de facto equality can be realised for LGBTI people, and can help achieve this by addressing social norms that are based on prejudice and discrimination, including by providing marriage equality for same-sex couples. Over time then, AI believes that the tide will continue to shift, and decisions such as <i>Joslin</i> and <i>Schalk & Kopf</i> will be overtaken and all states required to follow the Isle of Man's example.</p>
Nicola Tooms	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>I agree. Absolutely. And as I a woman married to a man I do not believe that allowing same sex partners to marry devalues my marriage in any way. If anything it values it.</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>The religious argument 'that sex is ordained first and foremost for the procreation of children' is nonsense even within the confines of religious debate.. There are no rules about couples who can not conceive for medical reasons, or couples who from the outset choose not to have children. The Book of Common Prayer even has a separate prayer to be read in the marriage ceremony where the woman is beyond childbearing age!</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>No</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>I think the definition of adultery needs to be amended. I think that sexual relations between two people outside of the marriage should be considered adultery, regardless of the sex of any party or if the marriage is between two people of the opposite sex or not.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>I would like to see a change to the laws regarding civil weddings. I can appreciate that it is too difficult to make laws to compel churches from marrying two people of the opposite sex however I fear that we may end up with a situation that all or most churches will opt out and a same sex couple that wishes to have any religious element to their ceremony will be unable to do so.</p> <p>Current rules do not allow for any religious music or readings or blessings at civil ceremonies and opposite sex couples wishing to include these elements in their ceremony may opt for a church wedding. Or those opposite sex couples who are believers and wish to be married in the sight of God, can opt for a church if they wish.</p> <p>Although it would be inappropriate to ask a registrar to do this there could be provision that allows for a blessing to be delivered by a third party supplied by the couple.</p> <p>I think this change in the law should extend to all couples, not just same sex couples. Why should one have to opt for a Church just because you wish to walk down the aisle to your favorite Bach tune?</p> <p>I am answering as myself and not on behalf of any group.</p>
<p>Heather Williams – Policy & Research Manager, LGBT Foundation</p>	<p>Isle of Man Draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill Consultation – response from LGBT Foundation</p> <p>Introduction</p> <p>LGBT Foundation is a vibrant charity committed to achieving more positive outcomes for LGBT people, with a wide portfolio of well-established services and new initiatives. The LGBT Foundation is also the lead organisation of the Department of Health funded National LGB&T Partnership.</p> <p>The Lesbian and Gay Foundation is based in Manchester, and supports over 40,000 lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people each year. In addition to a wide range of health and advocacy services, it also undertakes research, information provision and policy campaigning on a national scale. As a result, LGBT Foundation provides more direct services and resources to more LGBT people than any other organisation of its kind in the UK. LGBT Foundation is reported by service users to be one of the first points of contact for them when they have been at a crisis point in their lives. We campaign for a fair and equal society where all lesbian, gay and bisexual people can achieve their full potential, and our vision is: 'we believe in a fair and equal society where all lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people can achieve their full potential.'</p> <p>Consultation response</p> <p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>Agree. Access to civil marriage is an important step forward for LGBT people, and the ban on same-sex marriage on the Isle of Man is arguably the last major inequality within the British Isles for LGBT people. Marriage is an important institution to millions of people, including many LGBT people. The important principle is one of equal opportunity of access to this institution.</p> <p>The vast majority of our beneficiaries and stakeholders agree on the equality of opportunity to access civil marriage for all couples regardless of gender or gender identity (see appendix).</p> <p>For many trans people, same-sex civil marriage will mean an end to the distressing and inconvenient practice of having to dissolve one's existing marriage to obtain a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC). We would like it to be possible for couples that have ended their marriages for a partner to obtain a GRC, to be able to have their benefit contribution or entitlements from their original marriage retrospectively re-instated and any costs reimbursed.</p>

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	<p>Marriage is a universal concept and internationally recognised. The UK is widely recognised as a leader in LGBT rights and many other countries have moved to same-sex marriage since the Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Spain, Portugal, Norway, Iceland, many US states, South Africa, Sweden) and others propose to do so. We strongly believe that the Isle of Man should follow this lead in legalising same-sex marriage.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island’s legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>We strongly believe that that the Isle of Man should follow this lead in legalising same-sex marriage. However, we do not agree with the UK legislation in relation to not allowing religious marriage to same-sex couples unless the religious organisation has approved it. It should be for individual places of worship to decide whether or not they want to marry same-sex couples and freedom of religion means that the government should not continue to support the ban on religious marriage for same sex couples. A clause expressly stating there is ‘no obligation’ on religious organisations to perform same-sex marriages, such as that contained in the Civil Partnership Act 2004 in relation to hosting civil partnerships on religious premises, would protect religious organisations who do not wish to marry same-sex couples from being forced to do so. If religious marriage is excluded, the Marriage Acts would actually have to be amended to exclude same-sex couples and introduce new discrimination.</p> <p>We believe it is not the role of government to ban those religious organisations, who wish to open up religious marriage ceremonies to same sex couples, from doing so. The role of government is to ensure that any changes to the primary legislation is fully inclusive, (although not mandatory), and the debate should then move from activists lobbying government, to conversations with individual religious organisations.</p> <p>Comments on the consequential impacts of same-sex marriage legislation:</p> <p><u>State pensions and occupational pensions:</u></p> <p>There is no justification for same-sex couples and opposite-sex couples to be treated differently as they are now. A surviving spouse or civil partner of a deceased member should be treated in the same way whether they are male or female. The same principles should be applied to the surviving spouse of someone with a state second pension, irrespective of gender or gender identity.</p> <p><u>Administrative processes:</u></p> <p>There is no reason why there should be differences with marriage and civil partnership certificates. Addresses should be withheld on both. Many people now have single parents of either gender, so having both parents’ names (if applicable) on the certificate rather than just the ‘father’s’ name would be preferable. Spouses should be referred to as such, not as “husband” and “wife” in legislation, forms etc.</p> <p><u>International recognition:</u></p> <p>Provisions now in place for civil partnership should be extended to same-sex marriages, for example the ability to divorce on the Isle of Man if the same-sex couple married here. A couple may have no other connection with the Isle of Man and both may be nationals of a country which does not recognise their marriage and thus will not allow them to divorce. Foreign same-sex marriages should be recognised as a marriage whenever they were entered into.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>Please see comments above.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>LGBT Foundation would like to congratulate the Isle of Man for taking this step to introduce equal marriage legislation for same-sex couple and facilitating this consultation process, so working towards achieving equality for LGBT people. LGBT Foundation would also like to thank the Lesbian & Gay Lawyers Association (LAGLA) for providing some of the material in this submission.</p> <p>LGBT Foundation takes this opportunity to urge the Isle of Man to legislate to outlaw all forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in the provision of goods and services. It is deeply concerning that in 2015, the Isle of Man has no comprehensive equality legislation offering protection from discrimination to its LGBT citizens and we would strongly urge the government to pass the draft Equality Bill and so enshrine anti-discrimination legislation in Isle of Man law.</p> <p>Appendix</p> <p>Below is the submission of evidence from LGBT Foundation (previously known as The Lesbian & Gay Foundation [LGF]) to the Public Bill Committee regarding Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill, 2013. It evidences support for same-sex marriage from the LGBT community and the wider public.</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Support from the LGB&T community</p> <p>[1] The proposed legislation in the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill is of significant legal, social and cultural importance to the LGB&T community. Existing civil partnership legislation allows same sex couples to have a legal union, but denies them the symbolic status of marriage. While not all same sex couples will want to marry, the LGF strongly believes that all people should have equal access to marriage, whatever their sexual orientation.</p> <p>[2] The LGF notes that discussion of the Bill sometimes refers to 'gay marriage' and 'straight marriage'; we would like to emphasise that the correct terms are same sex and opposite marriage, which are fully inclusive of bisexual and trans people who may be in an opposite sex relationship but still identify as members of the LGB&T community.</p> <p>[3] The LGF has gathered comments from same sex couples explaining why the differences between civil partnerships marriage are important to them, demonstrating that it is not just the legal differences that matter, but the social differences too. A selection of comments is below:</p> <p>[4] David & Darren: <i>"Full marriage is important to us. It's simple, we both believe in equality and our right to have the same choices as anyone else. We feel that it is extremely important for us to be seen as equal in the law."</i></p> <p>[5] Kath & Christine: <i>"It's an awkward thing to say 'civil partnered', I just automatically say I'm married. We're trying to teach our children tolerance and not to discriminate against anybody at a time where there is discrimination against people wanting to marry each other because they love each other."</i></p> <p>[6] Rob & Richard: <i>"Like our parents, we too want to be able to say that we 'are married.'"</i></p> <p>[7] Sian & Sarah: <i>"Being civilly partnered means I immediately have to out myself, and so does my family. It makes you feel 'different' and 'other'. I wanted to get married like my sisters"</i></p> <p>[8] Nick & Sarah: <i>"We want to be married like proper equals to every other married couple. Civil partnerships do not seem to be taken as seriously to the rest of the world as marriage. To the individual having the partnership it can feel like it is a second class service. I think it contributed to homophobia as it's not accepted and not equal. If we could get married, then being lesbian or gay would be seen as more 'normal' and there would be less discrimination over time"</i></p> <p>[9] Martin & Daniel: <i>"My brother will soon be a married man, just as my father was a married man, and my grandfathers before him. If Dan and I had a civil partnership under current legislation, I would not be able to say the same about myself. What would I be? 'Partnered'? What would my marital status be? 'Living as if married'?"</i></p> <p>Support from the wider community</p> <p>[10] The LGF is clear that the legislation proposed in the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill is not about gay rights, or about 'straight' couples vs. 'gay' couples. Across society, people are ready for this change in legislation and see no need to perpetuate the difference in legal unions available to same-sex and opposite sex couples.</p> <p>[11] Successive polls amongst the general public since 2004 have shown that the majority support same sex marriage.²⁵ YouGov's latest poll shows 55% of people support the Bill.²⁶</p> <p>[12] The LGF has gathered comments from opposite sex couples explaining why the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill is important to them. This demonstrates that equal civil marriage is important not just to those who are in same sex couples, but is part of the wider issue of equal rights for all.</p> <p>[13] Sarah & Chris: <i>I want my gay friends and family to have the same rights as I do. To me, it's a no brainer.</i></p> <p>[14] Claire & Rob: <i>I see no difference between my relationship with my husband, and my friends' relationships with their same sex partners.</i></p> <p>[15] Caroline & Scott: <i>In light of the fact that same-sex couples still cannot get married I view my ability to do this as a privilege. Denying same-sex couples the ability to have their love and commitment recognised as a 'marriage' reinforces the damaging idea that their relationships are less valid than mine.</i></p> <p>Love Equal Marriage campaign</p> <p>[16] Since the announcement of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill in early December 2012, the LGF has run a <i>Love Equal Marriage</i> campaign to encourage discussion of the bill and raise awareness of how people can show their support for it. In the course of the campaign so far, over 1700</p>

²⁵ House of Commons Library. *Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill (Bill No 126 of 2012-13) Research Paper 13/08*. 2013.

²⁶ YouGov. *YouGov/Sunday Times Survey Results Fieldwork: 31st January - 1st February 2013*. 2013.

Respondent	Comments
	<p>postcards have been distributed to members of the public wishing to write to their MP asking them to support the bill.</p> <p>[17] During February, the LGF outreach team visited the ten boroughs of Greater Manchester talking to people about equal marriage. Over the 4 day period, the team spoke to over 750 people, around 96% of whom were positive about same sex marriage. People could have their photos taken to pledge their support for the bill; in total, 218 photos were taken of individuals, couples and groups. Photos from the roadshow can be viewed here: http://www.lgf.org.uk/news-articles/in-pictures-love-equal-marriage-roadshow.</p> <p>Equal value</p> <p>[18] Successive polls have shown that young people are more likely to support same sex marriage.²⁷ However, evidence shows that homophobia is still rife in UK schools²⁸, and several high-profile homophobic murders in recent years have involved young people still in or just out of the education system. The LGF believes that the proposed legislation would contribute to social change in terms of positive perceptions of LGB&T people and reduced homophobia.</p> <p>[19] Legislating for marriage equality between same sex and opposite sex couples would send out a strong message about the acceptability of same sex relationships, and the equal value placed on these relationships with opposite sex relationships by society.</p>
Paul Murphy	<p>Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>I completely agree same sex couples should be able to get married.</p> <p>If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>I completely agree the islands legislation should be based on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom.</p> <p>Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>I completely agree with this.</p> <p>Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>As a gay man, myself and my partner are completely in love and devoted to each other. We plan to spend the rest of our lives together. We are just as in love, if not more in love than many straight married couples.</p> <p>I feel I should be given the same rights a man has to marry woman, on the island that means so much to me.</p> <p>All I wish for is for my self and my partner to be equally accepted as a married couple, as my friends in opposite sex marriages are accepted.</p> <p>I don't feel this can ever truly be achieved if same-sex marriage is not made legal.</p> <p>For many people living/working in the Isle of Man, same sex marriage may have no relevance. I can however guarantee that for the minority of gay people who this affects it means so much.</p> <p>The island has come a long way since 1992 when homosexuality was legalised, followed equal age of consent in 2006, employment protection from discrimination in 2006 and the right to enter into a civil partnership and the right to adopt children in 2011. We need to one step further to ensure true equality on the island.</p>
Eric Holmes, Regional Officer, Isle of Man, Unite the Union	<p>I am responding on the behalf of Unite the union to your public consultation. We at Unite the union as a whole, fully support this important proposed step in recognition of same sex couples, having legal right to become married and recognised as such, on the Isle of Man.</p> <p>However, we urge the government to use this opportunity to legislate for a more progressive law than is currently in place in the UK and put right the anomalies existing in the UK legislation on same sex marriage. The Isle of Man should we believe:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce an Equal Marriage Act instead of Same Sex Couples Act as was initially campaigned for in the UK. This will make it an all-encompassing legislation as it would include same sex couples, heterosexual couples and trans men and women 2. Make civil partnership available to all to cover same sex and opposite sex couples 3. Allow same-sex and opposite-sex couples to have the choice of a religious, humanist or civil marriage 4. Follow Scotland's example to not include a "spousal veto" on gender recognition which permits the spouse to prevent the award of a Gender

²⁷ House of Commons Library. *Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill (Bill No 126 of 2012-13) Research Paper 13/08*. 2013.

²⁸ Guasp, April. *The School Report*. Stonewall, 2012.

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Recognition Certificate (GRC) to a person who has undergone gender reassignment by refusing to sign a statutory declaration of consent for the marriage to continue. "spousal veto" could be in breach of Article 8 in the Human Rights Act 1998</p> <p>5. Equalise survivors benefits for same sex couples</p> <p>We wish to commend the Isle of Man government and Chief Minister Allan Bell on the work carried out so far and we are hopeful that this important Bill receives the necessary support and adoption into Manx Legislation and indeed include the above within it.</p>
<p>Department of Home Affairs</p>	<p>I have consulted our Service Heads and can provide the following response at officer level to the Bill</p> <p>Fire and Rescue Service - no comments expressed</p> <p>Prison and Probation Service - In terms of the direction of this legislation the Service has no issues.</p> <p>The Prison is not obliged to allow any prisoners to marry, whether same sex or otherwise. Prisoners who want to marry whilst in custody have to make an application to marry which is then processed, including checking with the police and AG's Chambers, (Prosecution), in case there is any legal reason for not allowing it to happen, e.g. perverting the course of justice, illegal immigrant status, etc</p> <p>If a permission is granted the ceremony cannot take place in the prison as it was never registered as a venue for marriages. Historically whenever an application for marriage has been allowed, (no police or AG objection, <i>and</i> security cleared), the prisoner has been charged for the escorting officers' time, (usually at Bedwatch rate) This approach ensures the prisoner shows a real commitment both personally and financially to the marriage.</p> <p>The Communications Division - has no views on the matter</p> <p>Isle of Man Constabulary - The IOMC supports the proposals. But wish to raise one matter which is the move forward with this legislation reinforces the absolute need for there to be legislation that outlaws hate crime. The Department came close five or so years ago, when clauses were withdrawn from a criminal justice bill. It is important that the criminal law keeps pace with societal changes. In the Chief Constable's my view, existing law is insufficiently strong.</p> <p>If you have any question on the above please let me know</p>
<p>Gavin Boyd Policy and Advocacy Manager, The Rainbow Project</p>	<p>Introduction:</p> <p>The Rainbow Project is the largest support and advocacy organisation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender people and their families in Northern Ireland. Founded in 1994, The Rainbow Project provides a number of services for the LGB&T community including: hate crime and housing support, sexual health testing, youth services, peer and social support groups, counselling and education support.</p> <p>The Rainbow Project is also the lead organisation on LGB&T research and public policy advocacy in the region having conducted research on the community's experiences of: hate crime, education, mental health, drug and alcohol use, employment and housing.</p> <p>The Rainbow Project is grateful for the opportunity to respond to this consultation on introducing marriage for same-sex couples on the Isle of Man and submits this response to aid the government in its deliberations.</p> <p>Consultation Questions:</p> <p><i>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</i></p> <p>The Rainbow Project believes that the right to marry is a fundamental human right which should be guaranteed for all citizens regardless of their sexual orientation or gender. We consider the denial of the right to marry for same-sex couples to be irrational and incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights and, therefore, agree that same-sex couples should be able to marry on the Isle of Man.</p> <p><i>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</i></p> <p>The Rainbow Project believes that the Isle of Man government is correct to look to other jurisdictions in these islands to develop the best possible form of legislation for the Isle of Man. The Rainbow Project suggests that the Scottish government's model of same-sex marriage recognition is the most comprehensive and inclusive legislation within the United Kingdom.</p> <p><i>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</i></p> <p>The Rainbow Project believes that freedom of religion is a fundamental right which must be respected by all governments. To this end, The Rainbow Project believes that any legislation permitting same-sex marriage must include such protections to ensure that no religious grouping or celebrant may be forced to conduct such a ceremony which is incongruous with their faith. However, we also believe that no religious grouping or celebrant should be</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>prohibited from conducting such ceremonies. This proportionality should be reflected in any legislation.</p> <p>The Rainbow Project also believes that there is no rational justification for allowing an opt-out for civil registrars. This role is a state function, which requires no religious aspects and therefore the religious beliefs of registrars is not engaged in the fulfilling of their public duties. This is the settled principle established in <i>Ladele v London Borough of Islington</i>.</p> <p>The Rainbow Project believes that same sex marriages should be treated the same as male/female marriages for the purposes of Isle of Man law.</p> <p>The Rainbow Project further believes that no transgender person should be prevented from the legal recognition of their true gender by the fact of their pre-existing marriage, regardless of any potential opposition from their spouse.</p> <p><i>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</i></p> <p>The Rainbow Project commends the Isle of Man government for publishing this draft same-sex marriage legislation and consultation document. We believe that marriage equality for same-sex couples is an idea whose time has come and this is why ever increasing numbers of states around the world are introducing similar legislation.</p> <p>The Rainbow Project believes that LGB&T citizens have the same rights to marriage, family life and the dignity these rights engender in LGB&T persons. The Rainbow Project asserts, as evidenced by our research, that the denial of fundamental human rights to LGB&T people, such as the right to marry, contributes to societal bias against LGB&T people and is a contributing factor in the poorer mental health outcomes for LGB&T people when compared with the general population. By legislating for same sex marriage on the Isle of Man, the government is indicating that it values its LGB&T citizens and this is to be welcomed.</p>
Kirsty Watkinson	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>I am in full agreement that same sex couples should be able to get married</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>I think it using the UK legislation as a basis for our procedures would work well</p>
Peter Tatchell	<p>I am responding both in an individual personal capacity, as Peter Tatchell, and also in an organisational capacity on behalf of the London-based human rights organisation, the Peter Tatchell Foundation.</p> <p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married?</p> <p>We agree that marriage should be opened up to all couples, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. The right to marry the person one loves is a fundamental human right, enshrined in Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In a democracy, everyone should be equal before the law, with equal rights and equal responsibilities. To deny same-sex couples marriage equality is discrimination, which is unjust and in contravention of their human rights. While we accept that some religious people oppose same-sex marriage, we do not believe they should have a right of veto over civil (non-religious) marriages in register offices and other licensed non-religious premises.</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom?</p> <p>We do not support the Isle of Man adopting the England and Wales model of a separate marriage law for same-sex couples, the Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Act 2013. Creating this whole new legislative framework was not true equality and was a needlessly complicated and lengthy way of giving marriage rights to same-gender partners. It would have been far simpler and far fairer to repeal the legal statutes banning same-sex marriage in England and Wales and thereby open up the Marriage Act 1949 to same-sex couples. Short amendments to the 1949 Act could have achieved this objective and also provided the special exemptions from same-sex marriages sought by some religious organisations.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document?</p> <p>We support the Isle of Man legislating a single, inclusive marriage law - rather than a separate marriage law for same-sex couples. Separate laws are not equal laws. In other words, we support amending the Marriage Act 1984 to permit same-sex marriage.</p> <p>We oppose the Isle of Man incorporating into its marriage law the transgender and pension discrimination that is enshrined in the England and Wales same-sex marriage legislation.</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments? We thank the Chief Minister and his government for bringing forward legislation for marriage equality - and look forward to its enactment.</p>
Manx Rainbow Association	<p>The Manx Rainbow Association (MRA) is a local Manx charity that seeks to organise, serve and advocate for the Isle of Man's Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Transgender (LGBT) community. The MRA opposes all forms of discrimination on the basis of sexuality and gender. The MRA recognises that marriage is an important institution in the Isle of Man. The principles of long-term commitment and responsibility that underpins marriage bind generations together.</p> <p>Marriage is also an institution that has a history of continuous evolution. As society has changed, so marriage has changed to become available to an increasingly broad range of people. During the course of the 19th century, many iniquities in marriage were removed. The 20th century saw great battles about the status of women within marriage. These have now been resolved: married men and married women are now equal before the law. Now, in the 21st Century, it is available to all those over 16 who are prepared to make vows of life-long fidelity and commitment. Therefore, marriage has been an institution that has changed much over the centuries and is in almost every respect an inclusive institution. Except, that is, if your partner is of the same sex.</p> <p>Since 1836, in the UK, marriage has been a civil institution as well as a religious one: the State recognises equal rights in all aspects of civil life and cannot justify preventing people from marrying owing to couples being same-sex. We disagree with arguments that marriage will be weakened in substance or meaning by opening the institution to same-sex couples. It is our view that with the passing of these proposed changes and the resulting registrations the institution would only be strengthened.</p> <p>The introduction of Civil Partnership in 2011 was certainly an important step forward for the island, but the fact that same-sex couples are excluded from marriage remains. For the MRA, extending marriage to same sex couples is all about how society treats its citizens – we are all equal and this should include equality under the law as a principle of good governance in a democratic and free society.</p> <p>For those in love, marriage is considered by many to be an essential step in making the ultimate and most significant commitment to one's partner. This commitment is no different in quality or strength for same-sex couples than for opposite sex couples. Therefore, the MRA believes that marriage should be opened up to same-sex couples to allow people to meet their needs by making this form of commitment.</p> <p>Freedom of religious belief is as important to the LGBT Community on the Isle of Man as equality for all before the law. Both the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and the rights enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights put the protection of religious belief in this matter beyond doubt. Therefore, religious and belief celebrants should not be forced to conduct rites that are against their beliefs. However, religious and belief celebrants should have the right to conduct rites and ceremonies according to their beliefs.</p> <p>Civil registrars should not be permitted to opt-out of their duties in conducting same-sex marriages owing to personal beliefs. A person's beliefs, regardless of their content or societal acceptance, should not interfere with the performance of a registrar's duties in offering a public service. Enabling a refusal to conduct same-sex marriages would constitute an acceptance of homophobic beliefs and practices that would have a detrimental effect on the dignity of members of the public and government workers. The provision of a public service must be free from discrimination as would be compatible with principles of Equality and Diversity.</p> <p>The MRA believes that civil partnership must be made available to opposite-sex couples. Currently, a person undertaking and declaring that he or she is in a civil partnership effectively results in a declaration of their sexual orientation. As an organisation that supports equality, we believe that this should also apply to opposite-sex couples. Unless the law is changed, civil partnerships will result in legal inequality for opposite-sex couples whose needs in having their relationship recognised are not met by marriage. Crucially, the law should be changed owing to the issues for transgender people having to end their civil partnerships to gain gender recognition were they not to convert their relationship status from civil partnership to marriage.</p> <p>The MRA would like to thank the Isle of Man Government for its attention to these necessary changes to Marriage and Civil Partnership legislation in the interest of legal equality for all Manx citizens.</p>
Marown Parish Commissioners	<p>Consultation: Draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill The above was considered by the Commissioners on Wednesday last. In answer to question 1, they resolved to agree with the proposal. They have no comment to make on the other questions.</p>

Respondent	Comments
	The Commissioners trust that this is helpful. Please contact the undersigned if you require further information.
Peter Pierce	<p>Question 1: Do you agree or disagree that same sex couples should be able to get married? YES</p> <p>Question 2: If the Island is to have legislation to allow same sex marriage, do you have any comments on the general principle of basing the Island's legislation on the legislation that applies in parts of the United Kingdom? No.</p> <p>Question 3: Do you have any comments on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill that is provided in this document? No.</p> <p>Question 4: Do you have any other relevant comments?</p> <p>I believe that same sex couples should be allowed to marry and should have the same rights and responsibilities as heterosexual couples.</p>

Other responses

Respondent	Comments
Isle of Man Chamber of Commerce	The Isle of Man Chamber of Commerce was sent this consultation presumably as Chamber is on the generic distribution list rather than selected for relevance. Indeed section 4.1 of the consultation document points this out: 'it is not considered that the proposals would have any impact on the business or third sectors.' It would be quite inappropriate for the Isle of Man Chamber of Commerce to make any comments on this non-business related consultation
Department of Infrastructure	Thank you for giving the Department opportunity to comment on the draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill. I have been asked to advise that the Department of Infrastructure, though its Housing Division, already recognises same sex relationships and Civil Partnership with regard to access to Housing, therefore same sex couples by marriage would not be any different in terms of terms of accessing affordable housing options i.e. public sector, and First Time Buyer.
David Varley	<p>I comment only for myself (although I may use a quote or two from my late father). I am single and am against superstitions of all kinds, putting up with an Established Church only because it offends few and neatly decorates some of the milestones of public and private life. Appreciating is not the same as believing! My politics might be described as humane fascist had not the other kind given it such a bad name.</p> <p>--</p> <p>In summary I am not in favour any form of regulation for same sex (or any other form) of marriage.</p> <p>At a time when public resources are clearly under pressure could we not attempt legislation that lessens the scope and demand of Government instead of inflating it?</p> <p>Can anyone explain logically why the State should have any part in warranting any particular sexual union?</p> <p>Does the State consider that the furtherance of the race will only occur if the union of the putative parents is formally licensed? Are we to expect some miracle of fecundity to descend on any couple to whom the same licence has been extended regardless of biology?</p> <p>If the State considers it advisable to encourage tax avoidance by establishing a reduced tax regime for those who acknowledge their familial intentions through marriage, discretely registered or accompanied by public ceremony, then we might be getting somewhere along the route to understanding how our finances so closely approach the wrecking place. Indeed one wonders if the only wisdom in extending the licence regime to all sorts of couplings is to simply swell the numbers eligible before trapping them in a reversal of the policy and taxing them at a higher rate!</p> <p>The taxing or supporting of an individual from cradle to grave, and beyond, should be simplified. Equitability of inheritance can already be addressed in the Courts when a Testator has Willed badly or when no Will has been made. There is no need for formalised pairing to be any part of the State's business.</p> <p>For those that need the social scaffold of marriage I am sure the Churches (various) could get on and do that with no need for Governmental interference.</p> <p>--</p> <p>Having questioned the need for the licence itself we are left with the matter of the want for it, and whether that should be a matter for celebration. Tastefulness must necessarily apply only to those of our behaviours done in public. I am sure we all do things in private that we recognise would be not be socially acceptable if done in the street. We also recognise 'normal'. That is not a label that applies necessarily to what we do ourselves but to what the majority does. All things are on the curve of normal distribution but that does not mean that every behaviour is 'normal', only that which goes on in the central range of the bell curve is 'normal'. A highly populous world suggest strongly that same sex coupling cannot be 'normal'.</p> <p>There are many things that I consider distasteful. Perhaps I am unusual in that one of those things is ANY public declaration or gesture of affection. Pa's "Other people's sex life is boring" may not carry all before it but pretty much. Boring of any sort in public should be discouraged.</p> <p>I have always thought it somewhat prurient, after wedding breakfast speeches (one at least expected to be made clumsy by innuendo) to see off the Bride and Groom to their honeymoon. The guests are, without exception, saying to themselves (and sometimes to others) "We know what you'll be doing tonight". Clearly however most people do not have this hang-up and I venture to suggest that this is because the "What you'll be doing tonight" is 'normal' (whether it is what I would be doing that night or not I, like most others, would recognise it is 'normal').</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Obviously we do not celebrate everything that is 'normal' and tasteful but I cannot think of any celebration we hold specifically for something that is not 'normal'. To force any superstitious organisation to conduct ceremonies which are against its particular doctrine seems perverse. However, I am not sure that the State should recognise any superstition except that Governed by my Sovereign so that if the rite and right to marry is to become gender irrelevant then, as His Late Majesty dictated when divorcing his Church (if not so many of his wives) from Rome, it is only this organisation that should be compelled to provide the service as it is with Baptism, Confirmation, Funeral and the rest of that ornamental bull. If we sell the concept to the followers of Rome they will be engraving images of the new bedroom vistas before you can say knife.</p> <p>After forcing them to accept and celebrate sex acts between couples that can only be, by definition, exclusively recreational (procreating being the only function they consider sex fit for purpose and with some 'positions' mentioned in the most damning terms in their 'Holy' books) what next will we demand the Church include in the Catechism? A Matins ministry for menages a trois? What will be provided to comfort the single youth with only a hand for partnership? The lonely shepherd (or indeed his sheep)?</p> <p>I count anything that goes on between consenting peers acceptable, couples of whatever flavour are welcome to a spare bed (and for all anyone knows mine too), but that is not the same as saying that any particular practice should be welcomed in public or be celebrated.</p> <p>I regret one of the most missed assistance that redundancy has denied me is a proof reader. I apologies in advance for spelling (should be auto checked), grammar and anything that might be termed style.</p>
Karen Angela	<p>I write to voice my concerns with regard to the inequality a bill giving Same Sex couples the right to marry will cause! Whilst I myself hold no religious beliefs at all I have always tried to respect people who have them. It is becoming increasingly obvious to me and others that this bill will leave a great many people like Me and my Partner who cohabit at a distinct disadvantage as we have never married because we don't believe in the word "Marriage". So now we have Political Activists making a stand for Gay Marriage to be made Legal and they will still be entitled to a Civil Partnership. How is this a Fair and Inclusive Society? My Partner and I have worked hard all our lives, bought our own property, paid into our Pensions and been together nearly 16 years (some marriages don't even last that length of time). Yet we are not entitled to the same tax benefits or pension rights because we are both classed as single. I have no desire to be a called a wife nor He a husband but I am extremely proud to call him my Partner</p>
Treasury	<p>Treasury response to consultation on Draft Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill <u>Social Security Division</u></p> <p>1. The Bill's general policy aims</p> <p>1.1. Treasury (social security) has no views on the policy behind Bill's main purpose (to enable same sex couples to marry in the Isle of Man in the same way as opposite couples can do so).</p> <p>1.2. However, we would like to make the following comments about the Bill's provisions relating to social security functions</p> <p>2. State pensions and occupational pensions and survivor benefits</p> <p>2.1. Treasury notes that Parts 5 and 6 of Schedule 4 to the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 (state pensions and occupational pensions and survivor benefits) are not carried over into the Bill.</p> <p>2.2. However, we understand that it is expected that Treasury will incorporate Parts 5 and 6 into IOM social security and pension schemes legislation in the same (or a similar manner as far as is appropriate and possible) once the relevant provisions of the Bill come into operation.</p> <p>2.3. Treasury has no objections to this.</p> <p>3. Financial impact</p> <p>3.1. Implementing those changes will cause some hypothetical additional social security expenditure in that married persons/civil partners can gain to state pension benefits based on the National Insurance record of their spouse/civil partner. Surviving spouses/civil partners can also "inherit" state pension benefits based on their deceased spouse/civil partner. In the UK this is likely to be a reducing number of people, with the introduction of the new "state pension" under the Pensions Act 2014.</p> <p>3.2. It is not expected that Treasury will incur any additional IT expenditure arising directly or indirectly from the Bill, nor will any changes need to be made to Treasury customer information.</p> <p>3.3. The issue of survivor benefits in occupational pension scheme (opposite sex surviving spouses, same sex surviving spouses and surviving civil partners) and in particular, the financial impact on occupational pension schemes is still being considered by the UK Government.</p>

Respondent	Comments		
	<p>3.4. That issue would require to be considered in the IOM also.</p> <p>4. Drafting comments</p> <p>4.1. Treasury would also like to make the following observations on particular drafting issues.</p>		
	Bill's provision	Subject matter	Comment
	Clause 6	Section 4A of Marriage Act 1984 inserted	In new section 4A(3) "Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Act 2016" should say "Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2016", i.e. no hyphen between "Same" and "Sex"
	Clause 7	Section 4B of Marriage Act 1984 inserted	Missing « before new section 4B
	Clause 8	Section 4C of Marriage Act 1984 inserted	In definition of "relevant marriage" in subsection (4) insert space between "section" and "19"
	Clause 10	Section 17 of Marriage Act 1984 substituted	Missing full stop at end of new section 17(2)(c) instead of semi-colon
	Clause 11	Section 19 of Marriage Act 1984 substituted	In new section 19(1) "or" at end of paragraph (e) should be moved to end of paragraph (g)
	Clause 15	Section 21B of Marriage Act 1984 inserted	In new section 21B(2) formatting error between "section" and "20"
	Clause 17	New section 29D(9) of Marriage Act 1984 inserted	Full stop at end of paragraph (a) should be replaced with "; and"
	Clause 19	Section 36 of Marriage Act 1984 amended	Insert space between « and "," at start of inserted subsection (1)
	Clause 21	Section 55 of Marriage Act 1984 amended	In subsection (5) is the em dash redundant?
	Schedule 1	Paragraph 4	Should "section 0" say instead "22(1) or (2)"
	Schedule 1	Paragraph 5	In sub-paragraph (2) the terms as defined are in the wrong alpha order. Is this deliberate?
	Schedule 1	Paragraph 5	Paragraph spacing wrong between sub-paragraph (5) and (6)
	Schedule 2	Part 3	Heading says "MARRIAGE" not "MARRIAGE"
	Schedule 2	Part 3 – Schedule A1 inserted	In new paragraph 3 "England and Wales" in all places should say "the Island" I presume
	Schedule 2	Part 4	Formatting error in paragraph 9(5)

Respondent	Comments		
	Schedule 3	Consequential amendments	In paragraph 2 at end of sub-paragraph (2)(b) full stop at end should be replaced with “; and”.
	<p><u>Income Tax Division</u> Existing instances of “husband”, “wife”, “husbands” or “wives” in Income Tax legislation will need to be reviewed and probably amended.</p>		
Churches Alive in Mann	<p>Churches Alive in Mann (CAIM) represents the main Christian denominations on the Island. CAIM has encouraged and supported denominations and individual churches in their own submissions to the consultation.</p> <p>Regardless of sexuality or marital status, our churches seek to represent Jesus Christ by being places of welcome, inclusion and nurture. The Island’s churches offer a wide range of social care and services which aim to extend love and care to all by addressing physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs.</p> <p>While we are pleased to see a recognition of religious freedom of conscience within the draft Bill, we urge the Government to apply this freedom more widely. In particular, we wish to advocate for an opt-out for registrars whose faith may prevent them, in good conscience, from being able to conduct a same sex marriage. Since this protection is already built in to the draft Bill for those involved in religious ceremonies, it would be unhelpfully dualistic not to recognise the same faith-motivated concerns when a Christian (or person of another faith) works as a registrar.</p> <p>Due to the tight consultation timescale, and given the complexity of diverse church structures and processes, we find ourselves unable to speak in any depth on behalf of the Church on the Isle of Man. This leads us to comment that the consultation process, in allowing only four weeks for response, is unduly rushed. Given the societal significance of the changes being proposed, we find</p>		
<p>Rev. Richard Hall MA. District Chair/Superintendent The Methodist Church in The Isle of Man</p>	<p>A response to the IOM Government Consultation on the Marriage of Same Sex Couples.</p> <p>Due to the short time allowed for the public consultation The Methodist Church in the Isle of Man (MCIOM) has not been able to reach a common mind on this issue. I have personally endorsed the response posted by Churches Alive in Mann believing that it broadly represents the views of MCIOM. The Methodist Church in the Isle of Man is a District within the Methodist Church in Britain. Much of the church has already had to work with this issue due to the UK 2013 Equal Marriage Act. Our response to the current consultation is necessarily offered within the constraints of that earlier process. I quote from the Methodist Church in Britain response.</p> <p>SUMMARY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH RESPONSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Methodist Church, in line with scripture and traditional teaching, believes that “marriage is a gift of God and that it is God’s intention that a marriage should be a lifelong union in body, mind and spirit of one man and one woman”. • Our Church governance means that we would not be able to revise this position, even if we wished to, without an extended period of reflection and consultation. • Within the Methodist Church there is a spectrum of beliefs about human sexuality; however the Church has explicitly recognised, affirmed and celebrated the participation and ministry of lesbians and gay men. <p><u>End of quote.</u></p> <p>As a result of the UK government decision in 2013 the Methodist Church has committed itself to a process of consultation to determine whether the time is right to re visit its definition of marriage. This consultation process runs until our Annual Conference in June 2016. As members of that wider body the Methodist Church in the Isle of Man is fully involved in and committed to this process.</p> <p>It is inappropriate, therefore, for me to comment in any further detail on the current IOM Government consultation.</p> <p>Should it be that the IOM Government decides to adopt the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill. The Methodist Church in the Isle of Man will then be in the same position as the rest of the Methodist Church in terms of judging, in due course, what its response should be.</p>		
Patrick Parish Commissioners	<p>The Commissioners considered this matter at their meeting on Monday last. This late response is due to computer hardware failure, how restored. The Commissioners' only comment relates to bringing these arrangements into the ambit of a marriage without the safeguards being given to religious organisations being given to a civil registrar who, in all conscience, could not contemplate a "marriage" but might not have a problem with a "Civil</p>		

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Partnership".</p> <p>Although it seems that, in all meaningful senses, a civil marriage is a civil partnership, the terminology may be enough to cause some difficulty with a Registrar and that person must have the right to refuse the duty and for another to step in. If there is nobody among the Registrar's staff who can do this, then you have a real problem, but this conscientious objection must be protected.</p> <p>As to the question of "Divorce" (annulment would be a better term in all of the circumstances), the Commissioners believe that the definition of "unreasonable behaviour" is insecure</p> <p>The Commissioners trust that this is helpful. Please contact the undersigned if you require further information;</p>
Jared Holden	<p>I have the following comments (made on my own behalf and not on behalf of the faith to which I belong) in regards to the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill Consultation:</p> <p>Marriage is only recognised within the law of the land in order to provide certain rights to couples who have decided to spend their lives together in matrimony. As an active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, I firmly believe in marriage as an institution ordained of God between a man and a woman and I believe in the stability that marriage provides to individuals and families. Having said that, as a member of this same Church, I also believe in the rights of all to believe as they will and how they will and to be free to make choices based upon their own beliefs and their good conscience in so far as this freedom to choose does not impinge upon the freedom of others.</p> <p>The law of the land provides the rights of citizens and of residents and visitors are protected and balanced so that one person is unable to harm another through unlawful actions. The law of the land is not perfect and at times needs to be revised to provide greater equality for all. I believe that where same sex couples are accepted to be a group that exists within society that the law of the land should reflect this and provide that their rights be protected in equal measure to those of opposite sex couples. As such, I welcome in principle any legislation that will provide the mechanisms for same sex couples to enter an institution of marriage that would be recognised by the state.</p> <p>I disagree with the Consultation Document's claim that the differing views of people of faith cannot easily be reconciled. Where the views of people of faith or indeed of those not of faith differ widely, these views may always be reconciled in regards to law so long as the freedom of religion is not affected by any law that should be introduced by the state and likewise, beliefs held by any person should not dictate laws that would give freedom to some but withhold that freedom from others.</p> <p>I disagree with the Church of England being given special status on the Isle of Man and contest that no Church should be sponsored by state in any manner. I recognise that the Church of England is historically attached to the state that governs the UK with the Queen as its head, but the Isle of Man is a separate jurisdiction. I am aware that the Bishop of Sodor and Man is given an automatic seat on the Legislative Council under current arrangements within the law, though I have plans to campaign for this to be changed in any future Legislative Council Reform Bill. If there is any special status given to the Church of England in the Isle of Man I believe that such should be removed from law altogether. I believe in equality and this principle extends to all faiths being given equal recognition within the law. In regards to the proposed Bill, if the elements contained within it are believed to satisfy other faiths in a manner that is fair then I would strongly question why the Consultation Document suggests any need for additional conditions to be provided exclusively for the Church of England.</p> <p>I support the other elements of the Bill summarised within the Consultation Document specifically; that same sex couples can get married in the Island; that such marriages are the same as marriages between a man and a woman under the law of the Island; that marriage of same sex couples are permitted by way of civil ceremony; that where a religious organisation has opted in to the process, that marriage of same sex couples according to religious rites and usages are permitted; that there is no obligation or compulsion on religious organisations or individuals to carry out or participate in a religious marriage ceremony of a same sex couple; and that protection under the law is provided for religious organisations and individuals who do not wish to marry same sex couples in a religious ceremony.</p> <p>It is disappointing to see that the 'Churches Alive in Mann' group of Churches has been directly consulted, but other faiths have not been consulted. The 'Churches Alive in Mann' group is an exclusive group of Churches even to those of the Christian faith and does not readily accept membership from any Christian Church that does not share belief in certain doctrinal points. More critically, other faiths such as Judaism and Islam, which have a presence on the Island, are not at all represented in the list of direct consultees.</p>
Mr Peter Murcott	The Time Period for the Consultation on the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill

Respondent	Comments
	<p>I am in the process of preparing a response to this consultation. However, as a preliminary point, I wish to raise the question of the reduced length of the time period.</p> <p>Page 11 of the Consultation, paragraph 4.2 gives the closing date as the 13th November: 2015, whereas the Code of Practice on Consultations 2008 states in No.1 of the six criteria: -</p> <p>"Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of six weeks ... "</p> <p>Paragraph 1.5 of the (unnumbered) page 3 "Consultation Criterion 1" allows for a shorter period on several grounds, none of which applies here.</p> <p>Paragraph 1.7 says that the reasons must be given. It is to these reasons (see page 10 - 11) of the Consultation on the draft Same Sex Couples Bill that I now turn: -</p> <p>1: " ... the content of the Bill is relatively simple and straightforward"</p> <p>The Bill covers thirty pages, largely consisting of amendments by way of back reference to the Marriage Act 1984 ["the Act"]. For this reason, a 61-page copy of the Act is supplied, showing how it would be amended. The complexity of this is to be seen by the table of endnote references, covering no fewer than 116 areas of law. Unlike me, most people do not possess law degrees. It is difficult to see how they could possibly comprehend a total of ninety-one pages of legislation in a reduced time-period.</p> <p>2: "Members of the public took the opportunity to comment on the issue of same sex marriage during the consultation on the draft Equality Bill"</p> <p>There were in total 24 responses from "individuals" (see: page 4 of the Council of Ministers Response to the Consultation on the draft Equality Bill). These hardly represent a significant proportion of the general public.</p> <p>3: "The public was notified that the consultation would be published by the Chief Ministers' news release on October 2nd"</p> <p>Nevertheless, a mere notice of an impending Consultation does not assist the general public, who cannot be expected to speculate on what the document will contain. An enquiry at the Cabinet Office on Friday, October 9th, revealed that the Consultation Document was still in preparation and that it would probably be ready by the following Thursday or Friday. Further enquiries during the middle part of the week of October 11th at the Tynwald Library showed that the Consultation Document had not yet appeared. Eventually, a copy was obtained from the Cabinet Office on Friday, October 16th; though it may have been available the previous day - so let us say that its date of publication was probably no earlier than Thursday, October 15th</p> <p>4: "This is likely to be an issue on which people have very clear views ... "</p> <p>That can be equally true about many other issues, but is that a valid reason why people should have a shorter period in which to express themselves?</p> <p>5: "It is not considered that the proposals would have any impact on the business or third sectors"</p> <p>This is the most extraordinary reason of all, given the high profile court cases that have arisen in the United Kingdom, with regard to related issues of alleged discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or religion. This legislation, if passed, will lead to further legislation, comparable to that of the United Kingdom. The consequences for some people in the United Kingdom have been costly, legally complex, and have raised some fundamental issues of conscience. It might be added that the 'third sector' includes organisations run by Christians.</p> <p>I return to the point that none of the above reasons is to be found in paragraph 1.5 of Consultation Criterion 1 of the Code of Practice on Consultations. It may be that the list of reasons in paragraph 1.5 is not exhaustive; nevertheless, at the very least, they establish the type of reason that would justify a reduction in time - none of which is to be found here.</p> <p>I would, therefore, respectfully request that the appropriate authorities extend the time limit for this Consultation, at the very least, to Friday, November 20th 2015, which would represent the minimum period under the Code.</p>