

# Tell election candidates to resist Stonewall demands

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First Published by Christian Concern: November 7th, 2019

*Carys Moseley comments on Stonewall's manifesto for the upcoming general election and outlines why election candidates must resist their demands.*

As the next UK general election is now set for 12 December this year, political parties and other organisations such as charities and campaign groups are making their wishes known about public policy, in the hope that supporters and members of the public can ask candidates where they stand and whether they might support their proposals. LGBT charity and campaign organisation Stonewall has published an 18-page manifesto for the upcoming general election<sup>1</sup> – one that repays close reading.

## Stonewall's demands are extreme

Stonewall's demands clash with fundamental freedoms and important aspects of human dignity and welfare. This is precisely why some prominent members and supporters recently split off to found a new movement, the LGB Alliance.

Here are some of the most important demands from Stonewall's manifesto that political candidates should be asked to resist.

### Demand for gender identity law

*"Improve the Gender Recognition Act 2004 to streamline and de-medicalise the process for legal gender recognition. Reform must remove the requirement for intrusive medical tests, introduce a simple administrative process based on the principle of self-determination, and provide recognition for under 18-year-olds and non-binary people. This will bring us in line with international best practice."*

Stonewall demands that the government amends the Gender Recognition Act to allow people to change their gender in a merely legal sense. This compounds the already existing problem that everybody else is being forced to lie about whether a person is male or female. This is a fundamental assault on the freedom of conscience.

### Threat to single-sex sports

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Republished by the International Federation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice  
[09/08/2022]

*"Ensure that LGBT people can fully participate in local community events, including grassroots sport. Work with Sport England and other governing bodies to kick homophobia, biphobia and transphobia out of sport."*

The practical result of this demand would be the effective ending of single-sex sports on every level, both professional and amateur. This controversy about the 'inclusion' of male-to-female transgender people in women's sports is not just a problem for professional sports. It is a problem for all sports and exercise, and is a problem for public health, well-being and safety. Women and girls should not have to compete against men and boys and should not have to share changing facilities, showers or dormitories with men and boys.

### LGBT indoctrination in schools

*"Provide sufficient funding for every school in England to access face-to-face training on delivering LGBT-inclusive Relationships and Sex Education and engaging with parents."*

Many parents of different backgrounds have been deeply concerned about the content of primary school-level Relationships and Sex Education. Many will not have had MPs taking their concerns seriously. Worse, the Department for Education's Permanent Secretary, Jonathan Slater<sup>2</sup>, was named Stonewall Senior Champion of the Year for 2019<sup>3</sup>. This is highly relevant to the ongoing battle between parents and schools which are ultimately backed by the Department for Education.

In light of this revelation, political candidates should be asked whether they will speak up in Parliament for the impartiality of the civil service. The civil service is regularly scrutinised by the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee of the House of Commons.

### Targeting higher education

*"Commit to LGBT inclusion across all areas of education and training, including university, apprenticeships*

*and supporting young people in the workplace.”*

Universities are facing a challenging time when it comes to free speech, having endured controversies over no-platforming, foreign funding and the Prevent Duty. The last thing universities need is Stonewall's continued influence upon them, given the serious concerns that have emerged about Stonewall's transgender training for university staff. This is of particular concern for churches given that many church ordination programmes are accredited by universities.

### **Attack on right to pastoral care**

*“Take measures to ban the harmful practice of conversion therapy.”*

Stonewall is still demanding that the government bans 'conversion therapy'. 'Conversion therapy' is a deceitful term invented by gay activists to lump together mainstream psychotherapy, counselling and Christian pastoral care for people with unwanted same-sex attraction, with behavioural techniques that were only practised by some psychiatrists mainly on sex offenders in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Stonewall does not acknowledge that many people have benefited from being helped to realise their goal to move away from homosexuality. This fundamentally intolerant approach goes against the individual's right to determine his or her sexual orientation, as well as religious freedom, freedom of expression and the right to respect for private and family life.

### **Gender-neutral passports**

*“Review the need for gender markers in official documents. Where markers are needed, introduce an 'X' category to enable non-binary people to be recognised.”*

The Home Office admitted in court last year that introducing gender-neutral passports to satisfy the minuscule number of people who do not want to be recognised as male or female would lead to the lowering of border security effectiveness worldwide<sup>4</sup>. Given this, it beggars belief that Stonewall is still pushing for gender-neutral passports. They are not fit to advise the government on the matter.

### **Same-sex 'marriage' law in Northern Ireland**

*“Support the Love Equality campaign in Northern Ireland and make sure that, now marriage equality is set to be introduced, law is swiftly passed so that LGBT people, wherever they live in the UK, can marry the person they love.”*

MPs from across the UK went against the devolution settlement for Northern Ireland when they voted to force same-sex 'marriage' onto Northern Ireland. What is worse is that the law for Northern Ireland does not currently permit any exceptions allowing religious bodies to refuse to recognise same-sex 'marriage', unlike in the rest of the UK. Religious freedom in Northern Ireland is seriously under threat as never before. Stonewall's manifesto makes no mention of this, which implies that Stonewall does not care. Instead it calls for the law is passed 'swiftly'. On the contrary, such an illiberal law should be subjected to strong scrutiny at every stage, not passed so rapidly that nobody has the time to propose amendments.

### **LGBT rights petition for candidates**

Over and above its individual campaign points, Stonewall is calling for its supporters to get all candidates to sign a petition to support and extend LGBT rights<sup>5</sup>. In other words, to support the demands enshrined in its manifesto. Whilst every campaign group has the right to make its case and call for candidates to support its aims, it is vital that the implications of such a petition are understood.

Candidates belong to political parties which have different policies on a whole range of issues. Over recent years there has been a marked loss of freedom to criticise LGBT policies, and this is due to Stonewall's campaigning aimed at politicians, government and the public sector. Very few political candidates nowadays will campaign positively for marriage as being between one man and one woman, against LGBT indoctrination in schools, or to provide specific protections for people who want to leave homosexuality behind. People's right to receive help to live according to their God-given design as male or female is being subtly threatened.

### **Transforming reality on the official level**

Stonewall Scotland published a one-page general election manifesto<sup>6</sup> back in March 2015. In 2017 Stonewall was one of five charities that registered with the Electoral Commission as a non-party campaigner<sup>7</sup>. The reason was that under the so-called Lobbying Act, any organisation that spends more than £20,000 in campaigning during a general election in England has to register with the Commission. Back then, Stonewall published an 11-page manifesto for the election<sup>8</sup>, with detailed policy proposals.

Eighteen pages for this year's Stonewall manifesto is a lot to take in. Compare this with the manifestos published by long-established organisations such as the Royal College of General Practitioners which uses only 2 pages<sup>9</sup>, Citizens' Advice<sup>10</sup> (3 pages) and the World Wildlife Fund<sup>11</sup> (1 page). This discrepancy in itself is an indication of how ambitious Stonewall has become to influence candidates and government policy. For whilst most organisations that publish a manifesto do so in order to address one section of policy, Stonewall aims to transform policy across all of government. Its aim really is to transform our understanding of human reality at the official level. Given this, it shouldn't be surprising that conscientious political candidates are now under threat.

### **Are election candidates truly free?**

Roger Godsiff the Labour MP for Birmingham Hall Green has just been dropped as a prospective candidate by Labour's NEC because of standing up for his constituents' concerns about LGBT

indoctrination in primary schools<sup>12</sup>. This is a very sinister move by Labour and practically finishes off the long process of the de-christianisation of the Labour Party. Given this, it is highly unlikely that any prospective Labour candidates will now openly support constituents, particularly parents, who are concerned about this issue.

We know that Stonewall and other LGBT campaign groups have had a strong influence on Labour since the time of Tony Blair. For example in the 2017 general election Stonewall's demand for a gender identity law was also found later in the Labour Party manifesto using not only identical wording but also identical punctuation.

### **Challenge candidates to uphold fundamental freedoms**

Candidates in this general election need to be challenged to uphold the fundamental freedoms we all enjoy, which enable social life to be lived decently. If it were to influence the new government's policies, Stonewall's one-sided approach to rights and freedoms would have the effect of removing rights and freedoms that many people already have. Its blatant pushing of LGBT indoctrination in schools is wildly unacceptable and flies against the good judgement of parents and the needs of children.

Tell candidates not to sign the Stonewall pledge and show them why. Candidates need to be and feel free to come to a mature decision about such important issues, as they affect everybody in the country.

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- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/about-us/news/stonewall-launches-2019-election-manifesto>
  - <sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/people/jonathan-slater>
  - <sup>3</sup> <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/people/senior-champion-year-2019-jonathan-slater>
  - <sup>4</sup> <https://archive.christianconcern.com/our-issues/sexual-orientation/why-the-uk-governments-mixed-signals-on-gender-neutral-passports>
  - <sup>5</sup> <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/sign-our-petition-and-comeoutvoting-election>
  - <sup>6</sup> <https://www.stonewallscotland.org.uk/news/stonewall-unveils-equality-manifesto-ahead-of-election-2015>
  - <sup>7</sup> <https://www.thirdsector.co.uk/five-charitable-bodies-register-electoral-commission-election-approaches/communications/article/1435155>
  - <sup>8</sup> [https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/stonewall\\_uk\\_general\\_election\\_manifesto\\_2017.pdf](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/stonewall_uk_general_election_manifesto_2017.pdf)
  - <sup>9</sup> <https://www.rcgp.org.uk/-/media/Files/Policy/2019/RCGP-election-manifesto-nov-2019.ashx?la=en>
  - <sup>10</sup> [https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/campaigns/General\\_election/Citizens\\_Advice\\_manifesto\\_for\\_the\\_next\\_government.pdf](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/campaigns/General_election/Citizens_Advice_manifesto_for_the_next_government.pdf)
  - <sup>11</sup> [https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-10/election\\_Manifesto2019.pdf](https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-10/election_Manifesto2019.pdf)
  - <sup>12</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2019-50319044>