

Response to Gender Recognition Act (2004) consultation

Today, I am announcing the Government's response to the consultation on the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

As a Government, we are determined that everyone in the UK should be free to live their lives and fulfil their potential regardless of their sex, gender identity, race or disability.

We are proud to have introduced same-sex marriage and passed the Turing law.

We want transgender people to be free to live and to prosper in a modern Britain. We have looked carefully at the issues raised in the consultation, including potential changes to the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

It is the Government's view that the balance struck in this legislation is correct, in that there are proper checks and balances in the system and also support for people who want to change their legal sex.

However, it is also clear that we need to improve the process and experience that transgender people have when applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate – making it kinder and more straightforward. Our changes will address the main concerns that trans people themselves tell us they have about it.

In 2017 we conducted by far the largest survey ever of British LGBT people, with over 108,000 respondents, of whom 7000 were trans. Of those who had completed their transition, around 2 in 5 said that they had a Gender Recognition Certificate, a higher proportion than is often believed. The survey then asked those who had not applied what had prevented them from doing so. They were able to choose as many reasons as they wanted.

Thirty-eight per cent told us the process was too bureaucratic. So we will place the whole procedure online. Thirty-four per cent said the process was too expensive. This, too, we will address. We will reduce the fee from £140 to a nominal amount.

We have also come to understand that gender recognition reform, though supported in the consultation undertaken by the last government, is not the top priority for transgender people. Perhaps their most important concern is the state of trans healthcare. Trans people tell us that waiting lists at NHS gender clinics are too long. I agree, and I am deeply concerned at the distress it can cause.

That is why we are opening at least three new gender clinics this year, which should see waiting lists cut by around 1,600 patients by 2022. The full benefit of the increases in clinical capacity that we've been able to secure will lead to greater patient choice, shorter waiting times, better geographical coverage and easier access. It will also make it easier to

fulfil the medical requirements of obtaining a GRC.

It is why we last year provided funding for the UK's first National LGBT Health Advisor to help improve transgender people's experience.

Britain leads the world as a country where everybody is able to lead their life freely and treated with respect and that, for many years, transgender people have been widely accepted in British society; able to use facilities of their chosen gender; and able to participate fully in modern life.

At the heart of this is the principle of individual liberty. Our philosophy is that a person's character, your ideas, and your work ethic trumps the colour of your skin or your biological sex. We firmly believe that neither biology nor gender is destiny.

The Equality Act 2010 clearly protects transgender people from discrimination. The same act allows service providers to restrict access to single sex spaces on the basis of biological sex if there is a clear justification.

We want every individual, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity to have the confidence and the freedom to be themselves.

We will continue with our international leadership by hosting our International LGBT Conference to make sure LGBT people around the world are safe to be themselves.

A copy of the analysis report of consultation responses has been placed in the Library of the House and will be published on GOV.UK.

[UK support to Bangladesh economy](#)

Press release

The UK's Export Credit Agency, UK Export Finance (UKEF), has recently more than tripled its capacity for Bangladesh to £2.5 billion.



The UK's Export Credit Agency, UK Export Finance (UKEF), has recently more than tripled its capacity for Bangladesh to £2.5 billion. This announcement will boost trade partnerships between the two countries and help unleash Bangladesh's growth potential. The additional support will help UK exporters and Bangladeshi buyers access finance for projects in the country.

This will be on top of the UK Government's support for economic development in Bangladesh through the UK Aid, CDC Group, and share in International Finance Institutions' investments in Bangladesh.

For example, through the Bangladesh Investment Climate Fund, the UK Government supports improvement in business climate and infrastructure, helping business to invest and grow on a sustainable basis in Bangladesh. The UK's Business Finance to Poor programme supports development of an inclusive financial sector, providing low-income households and businesses means to participate and benefit from growth in Bangladesh.

The British High Commissioner to Bangladesh HE Robert Chatterton Dickson has welcomed the UKEF announcement and wider economic and commercial partnerships between the UK and Bangladesh:

"More than triple increase of over 200% in UKEF's capacity for Bangladesh is a great opportunity to expand and diversify the UK-Bangladesh trade and economic relationship. Bangladesh is an economic and development success story, with huge potential for further growth as the recovery from COVID gathers pace and new opportunities emerge for greener and more diversified growth. UKEF's announcement demonstrates UK determination to be a partner in that success."

More Information

- The UK is Bangladesh's third single largest export partner; the import figure stands at £3.3 billion for 2019. The UK is also the 2nd largest cumulative investor in Bangladesh with £1.9 billion of investments.
- UKEF is UK's export credit agency and a government department, working alongside the Department for International Trade (DIT) as an integral part of its strategy and operations.
- UKEF recently completed a comprehensive review of its Country Limits, resulting in increases in over 100 markets including Bangladesh.
- For further information, follow this [Link](#)

Forensic Science Regulator newsletter: number 30

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New tough measures to tackle modern slavery in supply chains

The government is introducing powerful new measures to strengthen the landmark Modern Slavery Act 2015 and ensure that large businesses and public bodies tackle modern slavery risks in supply chains.

In a world first, public bodies which have a budget of £36 million or more, including local authorities in England and Wales, will be required to regularly report on the steps they have taken to prevent modern slavery in their supply chains.

The government is committed to harnessing the spending power of the UK's public sector, accounting for around £250 billion of spend, to ensure responsible practises in supply chains and bring it in line with businesses.

Under the ambitious package of measures published today, the government has also committed to mandating the key topics that modern slavery statements must cover, from due diligence to risk assessment, to encourage organisations to be transparent about the work they are doing to ensure responsible practices.

The government will also introduce a requirement for organisations with a budget of £36 million or more in all sectors to publish their modern slavery statements on a new digital government reporting service.

This new service, which will be launched early next year, will radically enhance transparency making it easier for consumers, investors and civil society to hold organisations to account for the steps they have taken to root out modern slavery.

Safeguarding Minister Victoria Atkins said:

Sadly, we know that no sector is immune from the risks of modern slavery which can be hidden in the supply chains of the everyday goods and services we all buy and use.

We expect businesses and public bodies to be open about their risks, including where they have found instances of exploitation and to demonstrate how they are taking targeted and sustained action to tackle modern slavery.

The announcement forms part of the government's response to the transparency in supply chains consultation, which sought views from businesses, public bodies, investors and civil society on a range of options to strengthen the Modern Slavery Act's transparency legislation.

The government has also committed to establishing a single enforcement body for employment rights, to better protect vulnerable workers and ensure a level playing field for the majority of employers complying with the law. The government will publish a response to this consultation in due course.

The government will take forward options for civil penalties for non-compliance with the Modern Slavery Act in line with the development of the single enforcement body for employment rights.

Peter McAllister, Executive Director of the Ethical Trading Initiative, said:

ETI is pleased to see the changes introduced by government, in particular mandated reporting areas and extension to the public sector.

We hope that this leads to greater compliance and greater action from more companies.

There is no excuse for any business not to play their full part to contribute to eliminating the scourge of modern slavery.

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 made the UK the first country in the world to require large businesses to report on how they prevent modern slavery in their operations and supply chains.

To lead the way for the public sector, in March 2020 the UK government published the world's first Government Modern Slavery Statement, setting out the steps taken to eradicate modern slavery from its supply chains on around £50 billion of its annual spending.

All ministerial departments are now working towards publishing their individual modern slavery statements from 2021.

Jenrick announces next steps to put beauty and design at heart of planning system

- Nicholas Boys Smith to lead expert group advising government on how to embed beauty and quality into the new, reformed planning system
- Charles O'Brien appointed as government's new heritage adviser to help communities protect their treasured historic buildings and monuments
- Appointments follow proposals to overhaul England's planning system, placing beauty and design quality at the heart of all new developments

Last month, the government [published proposals for a new, faster, simpler planning system](#) which will require local authorities to introduce their own local design codes – enhancing beauty, quality and environmental standards by giving communities control over what is built in their areas.

Today (22 September 2020) the Housing Secretary, Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP, has announced that he has appointed Nicholas Boys Smith to establish a new design body, tasked with driving up design standards and supporting local communities to produce design codes defining beautiful design in each community.

Nicholas will chair a new steering group that will advise government on how best to help communities set these local rules for local developments and ensure that for the first time in history beauty, design and high environmental standards are fundamental to every planning application.

The new design body will support communities in producing binding design codes for their local area, massively increase focus on design and quality in the planning process and ensure local design and architecture is recognised and conserved.

As founding director of social enterprise Create Streets and co-chair for the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission Mr Boys Smith has a wealth of experience in researching popular and healthy places.

This work marks the next step in placing beauty and design firmly at the heart of the government's new planning system and consigning 'anywhereville' developments to history.

The Housing Secretary has also announced the appointment of Charles O'Brien as the government's Listing Heritage Adviser to help conserve some of England's historic buildings as part of the most ambitious local heritage campaign for 40 years.

This is the first time such a post has been created since the 1980s and has echoes of the famous Monuments Men who battled to save historic buildings and artefacts from bulldozers during the Second World War.

As a leading architectural historian and commissioner at Historic England, Charles will spearhead work with councils to increase the number of buildings and structures of significant historical and cultural value that are locally listed, helping to protect them through the planning system.

Speaking at the Create Streets Conference, Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP will say:

For the first time in this country, we are embedding beauty, design and quality in the planning system.

The creation of a new design body will empower communities to demand developments are built to local preferences and reflect the character and identity of their communities – assigning ‘anywhereville’ developments to history.

Nicholas Boys Smith has established himself as the pre-eminent voice in the movement to create beautiful, sustainable neighbourhoods with an enduring appeal and so I have asked him to help establish the new design body that will enhance what people treasure most about their local area.

Nicholas Boys Smith, leader of the steering group, said:

New places should be the conservation areas of the future: popular, beautiful, sustainable and supportive of public health and well-being. I am delighted to be asked to help achieve that and look forward to getting stuck in.

Heritage adviser Charles O’Brien said:

I am delighted to have been appointed to advise the Secretary of State on the programme to improve and extend the Local Lists of important buildings and places in England. The best way to protect the heritage we value is to identify what matters most to our communities and share our understanding and appreciation of them.

Culture Secretary Rt Hon Oliver Dowden MP said:

Historic buildings and monuments give each of our towns and cities their unique character. We’re determined to protect them for future generations, so that they appreciate all aspects of our past and enjoy beautiful places to live, work and visit.

I welcome the appointment of Charles O’Brien to help guide this work, which comes on top of the unprecedented investment we are making to support our heritage sector through the £1.57 billion

Cultural Recovery Fund.

Nicholas Boys Smith is the founding director of [Create Streets](#), and was co-chair alongside the late Sir Roger Scruton of the [Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission](#).

He is a Commissioner of Historic England and a senior research fellow at the University of Buckingham. Nicholas has written extensively on the links between design, wellbeing, value, sustainability and public support as well as leading or supporting many urban design and community co-design projects.

The planning system recognises 3 types of heritage asset – those which are of international importance, those which are of national importance and those which are important locally.

Nationally important heritage assets (for example; listed buildings, scheduled monuments etc) are identified and given statutory protection by Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (having consulted Historic England) on the basis of nationally-set selection criteria. Locally important heritage assets are identified by local planning authorities and neighbourhood plan forums based on locally-set criteria.

Historic England will work with the government's new independent local heritage adviser to promote greater awareness of the benefits of locally listing historic buildings and support people to nominate important buildings in their area, which they think should be protected.

Buildings and structures legible for local lists can include homes, cottages, cinemas, theatres and industrial heritage.

Charles O'Brien will work with Historic England to identify the 10 counties that are home to many historic buildings that are not yet protected and would most benefit from the additional listings.

Residents will be encouraged to nominate heritage assets in their area , helping to protect buildings by ensuring their significance is considered in any planning applications that affect the building and its setting. Charles O'Brien's work will be supported by experts at Historic England and £700,000 government funding.

Charles O'Brien FSA is joint editor of the Pevsner Architectural Guides and an author for several of the revised volumes in the Buildings of England series. He has worked on the research and editing of these guides for over 20 years, prior to which he was employed by the Historic Buildings Department of the National Trust. For the last 5 years he has been a Commissioner of Historic England and is the chair of its London Advisory Committee.