

NON-GENDERED

Fighting for legal and social recognition outside the gendered societal structure

Reform of the Gender Recognition Act

I've campaigned for most of my adult life for legitimate identity that most people can take for granted. My identity is non-gendered therefore the recent proposed GRA reforms would not have benefitted me nor would the proposals have benefitted any trans people who do not define their identities as either male or female.

I was invited to provide oral evidence before the select committee when the committee launched its first trans equality inquiry in 2015. The committee is no doubt aware that initial trans inquiry led to a report published in January 2016 which contained a series of key recommendations.

The government launched a public consultation on GRA reform two years after its official response to the committee report in 2016.

To the best of my knowledge the government has not adopted any of the recommendations contained in the committee's inaugural report.

I shall focus on the recommendations made in the committee's report that primarily affect me as a non-gendered trans person.

'X' PASSPORTS

The report stated that the UK "must" follow the lead of countries such as Australia and issue non gender-specific 'X' Passports [a neutral 'X' in place of gendered 'M' or 'F' that indicates the passport holder's sex as unspecified]. 'X' Passports are permitted in accordance with international regulations specified in ICAO Document 9303. A small but increasing number of countries issued 'X' Passports to their citizens at the time of the 2015 inquiry. The number has increased further however the UK Government resolutely refuses to change its discriminatory passport policy [a policy, not a law] that forces trans people who define as neither male nor female to indicate an inappropriate gender.

THE NON-GENDERING OF GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS AND FORMS

The committee's report was clear that the government should wherever possible move away from requiring people to indicate a sex/gender on forms and various documentation.

To the best of my knowledge there has been an abysmal lack of evidence of any progress.

For instance it was recently brought to my attention that the government website requires those who want to order a Covid-19 home test to enter whether they are male or female. I have raised the matter with Public Health England [PHE] who directed me to DHSC. PHE indicated in its response that the requirement for gender was so that orders for a home test would match the applicant's GP patient record. My GP patient record does not include an inappropriate gender as I'd requested the reference to assigned sex at birth be removed. I raised this important point in my email to DHSC but DHSC have yet to provide me with a response.

I am not aware of any government issued identity documents [eg. driver licence] where the requirement to indicate whether one is male or female has been removed or expanded to include a third, neutral option.

THE UK GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO GRA REFORM CONSULTATION

I did not respond to the public consultation because (i) I found the format objectionable and (ii) I had no faith that the government would change the current burdensome process of legal recognition for those who can apply for GRC under GRA 2004. I was subsequently proven to be right when the Equalities Minister delivered a response that was damning for trans people who had naively responded to the consultation in good faith two years earlier.

There is a growing consensus among more progressive countries towards legal recognition via self-declaration. Trans people in the UK had urged the UK Government to adopt self-declaration rather than the current dehumanising and outdated process that trans men and trans women must endure.

The UK Government decided against reforming the Act however undertook to reduce the fee without indication how much the fee would be reduced and undertook to put the process online.

The lack of take up after 16 years of GRA 2004 [approximately 5000 in total I believe] is due to the humiliating, intrusive and unreasonable nature of the process. Cost is a relatively minor factor. An online application process does not particularly help and indeed could present a further barrier to older trans people whose documentation/medical records are only available in hard copy.

The minister's response is insulting. And throughout the two years that trans people have waited for an outcome to the consultation a public hysteria has developed in the void that threatens further to undermine trans people's fundamental right to dignity and safety.

SUMMARY

To be frank, I am amazed that the committee has launched a fresh inquiry in the aftermath of the government's consultation response. It appears to me grossly insensitive to expect trans people to respond to yet another survey/consultation/review however I am willing to return [via Zoom] and provide further oral evidence on the marginalized status of socially invisible non-gendered trans people if invited.

I cannot discuss the lack of provision of 'X' Passports in the UK due to ongoing legal action.

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**CAMPAIGNING UPON A PRINCIPLE OF LEGITIMATE IDENTITY AS A
FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT**

**The denial of existence is the worst act of discrimination by the gendered
majority against the non-gendered**