

Written evidence from Sue Kinder [HAB0192]

I have made a submission because I believe that if people freely choose not to be married why should the law treat them as if they were married?

What equalities issues are raised by the lack of legal protection for those in cohabiting relationships?

There seems to be a move to promote equality by screening difference, redefining terms and creating uniformity.

Both marriage and cohabitation are available. The point of having a choice is that there are differences.

Should legal changes be made to better provide for the children of cohabiting partners?

Statistics show that the emotional and physical well-being of married couples and their children out-perform that of those who co-habit. Marriage provides stability in society. So there clearly is a difference and you won't alter it by undermining marriage and dumbing down - why not clarify and smarten up?

Should cohabiting partners have the same rights as those who are married or in a civil partnership?

I notice that you promote "rights" but are silent on "responsibilities". Marriage or cohabitation is a choice. The different responsibilities should carry a reflection in different levels of legal protection.

Should there be a legal definition of cohabitation and, if so, what should it be?

If you don't – then ANYTHING can be claimed as co-habitation.

But if you do, it'll be SO complex.

the same address?

two names on bills? or shall we go three and claim polyamory now equal to marriage?

the same name?

a period of time – a day, week or year?

sexual activity? what level of sexual activity?

a legal declaration?hmm!

What legislative changes, if any, are needed to better protect the rights of cohabiting partners in the event of death or separation?

The law provides for participants in commitment until death parts them (marriage).

Why should these rights apply to those who have NOT made such a commitment?

It's a slippery slope to apportion assets at each separation (well there's no commitment) or a death? Will historic co-habitations be valid? All more work for the courts!

How about drawing up pre-cohabitation agreements ☺ ? After all, it is their choice!

Are there examples of good practice in relation to the rights of cohabiting partners in the UK or internationally that the Government should seek to emulate in England and Wales?

There are different rewards and consequences even in differentiating between the responsibility to choose to eat a salad or a burger. Just because they are both termed "food" does not make them the same.

If unmarried people want the same outcomes as married people, then get married.
Simple!

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