

## **Written evidence from David Hunter [HAB0197]**

I write in a personal capacity as a retired teacher who completed 21 years as a Headteacher, and in pre-retirement and post-retirement assisted in running Summer holiday clubs for ages 6-11y and youth clubs for ages 11-16y.

I am a supporter of traditional marriage. I consider that marriage promotes stability for the upbringing of children and the good of society, and this is the reason it has significant status.

There is ample evidence that cohabitation is much more unstable than marriage. Here is one fact: by the time children turn five, 53% of them will have experienced their cohabiting parents' separation, compared with 15% from parents who are married.

In my view, couples who want the legal protections of marriage can get married.

If legal protection rights are given to cohabittees this will encourage cohabitation – a sure recipe for an unstable society – and cost even more than the current £50+ billion from the public purse.

If it is true that many people in our nation perceive that cohabiting couples and married couples have similar rights, then an education programme is needed, not a fundamental legal change which would undermine the sanctity of marriage.

*June 2021*