

Proposed Witchcraft Convictions (Pardons) (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

A proposal for a Bill to pardon all those convicted under the Witchcraft Act 1563.

The consultation runs from 23 June 2022 to 15 September 2022

All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer.

All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response.

Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded.

Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here:

[Consultation Document](#)

[Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice which explains how my personal data will be used.

On the previous page we asked you if you are UNDER 12 YEARS old, and you responded Yes to this question.

If this is the case, we will have to contact your parent or guardian for consent.

If you are under 12 years of age, please put your contact details into the textbox. This can be your email address or phone number. We will then contact you and your parents to receive consent.

Otherwise please confirm that you are or are not under 12 years old.

No Response

About you

Please choose whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.
Note: If you choose "individual" and consent to have the response published, it will appear under your own name. If you choose "on behalf of an organisation" and consent to have the response published, it will be published under the organisation's name.

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Academic with expertise in a relevant subject

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following:

If you have requested anonymity or asked for your response not to be published, please give a reason (Note: your reason will not be published):

Please provide your Full Name or the name of your organisation. (Only give the name of your organisation if you are submitting a response on its behalf).
(Note: the name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response).

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number.

We will not publish these details.

Aim and approach - Note: All answers to the questions in this section may be published (unless your response is "not for publication").

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill? (Please note that this question is compulsory.)

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

My mother's mother, who brought me up, was from Saltcoats, West Scotland. She often spoke to me about how the 'missionaries' came and deemed her people 'heathens'. when she married my grandfather, it bothered him that she was not baptised and he persuaded her to get baptised in her 50s. Transpose all this back to the witchhunt era and I imagine that some of granny's forebears might be included in the

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill? (Please note that this question is compulsory.)

category 'witch' and that her 'heathen-ness' would be part of a long story of oppression of traditional spirituality, healing, community and knowledges. As a social anthropologist, I know well how witch-hunts work (see eg academic work on 'child satanic abuse' accusations in our contemporary times). And I also know how many valuable are the worl'sd indigenous traditions of knowledge and healing - and the people who practice them. What we name 'witches' might be revered as shamen or as 'traditional healers' or simply as non-comformists in other times, other places.

Q2. Do you think legislation is required, or are there other ways in which the proposed Bill's aims could be achieved more effectively? Please explain the reasons for your response.

I'm not qualified to speak on this, not living right now in Scotland. I can see that you need both a public education campaign and also some form of symbolic restitution, like the Bill.

Financial Implications

Q3. Any new law can have a financial impact which would affect individuals, businesses, the public sector, or others. What financial impact do you think this proposal could have if it became law?

no overall change in costs

Please explain the reasons for your answer.

no reparations, nothing. Just an acknowledgement of damage done.

Equalities

Q4. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Positive

Please explain the reasons for your response including the impact on people with particular protected characteristics

There's people today reclaiming old traditions, people interested in old forms of knowledge, and this is all good for Scotland - and the world. Pluralism, tolerance, and getting rid of modernity's intolerance are all part of 3rd Millenium ways of making a better world.

Sustainability

Q5. Any new law can impact on work to protect and enhance the environment, achieve a sustainable economy, and create a strong, healthy, and just society for future generations.

Do you think the proposal could impact in any of these areas? (If you do not have a view then skip to next question)

Please explain the reasons for your answer, including what you think the impact of the proposal could be, and if there are any ways you think the proposal could avoid negative impacts?

'witches' kinds of knowledges and practices often connect deeply into practices of conservation, respect for nature, refusal of instrumental stances towards the natural world and they prefigure our contemporary understandings that we are not outside 'nature', exploiting its resources, but very much a part of it, and living in harmony with it. A bit less modernist instrumentalist rationality and a bit more ancient spirituality and wisdom could be a great thing. Rehabilitation of 'witches' can be part of that story.

General

Q6. Do you have any other additional comments or suggestions on the proposed Bill (which have not already been covered in any of your responses to earlier questions)?

I'm glad this is happening. For Granny Martha's sake and for Scots pride and for the planet.