

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".)

Member of the public

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what expertise or experience you have that is relevant to the subject-matter of the consultation.

Follower of the Witches of Scotland podcast

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

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).

Beverley Ann Baxter

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.

It's very important to acknowledge what happened in the past especially in areas where we were taught nothing at school. My education in that area has been sadly lacking until I came across the witches of Scotland podcast. It's important to understand why people behaved as they did during the period of these witch trials, and also to understand that this does not just live in the past, it is living now. Human behaviour hasn't changed that much over the centuries and this needs to be highlighted especially now in the age of the Internet where 'witch hunts' arising out of many reasons, can and do still occur.

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 think it's important to legislate and promote this legislation so that people understand just how important this is for our lives today and in the future

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?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your answer.

I'm sure there will be some increase in costs although how much I don't know just in the management of the process of legislation and the time taken working on it. I know that is a proposal for a national monument and this will obviously have some cost but that might be achieved by crowdfunding. I think it's more than worthwhile doing, especially given the Scottish government attempts to deal with the subject of misogyny, which is an extension I think of what happened during these witch trials yes and it affects both women and men.

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

When it's understood by more people, that the majority of those prosecuted in the past were women – somewhere more than 84%, it just highlights the need for us as a society to be continually watchful that equality is not pushed into the background.

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?

I don't think the law alone can do much, like other laws, it needs to be held continually at the forefront of peoples minds, and continuing reinforcement is necessary, otherwise people will just forget. We have a memorial service every year for the fallen in wars, perhaps if we had a national monument there could also be a national day and every year a ceremony to remember those accused of witchcraft, and how it was the behaviour of many many supposedly godly folk all over the world that led to this persecution. It would highlight, in our current culture, that persecution of people who are different, of who hold different views from us and hopefully instill habits to effect changes in behaviour

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 am so glad that someone has highlighted this historic injustice and is actually doing something about it, rather than just talking about it. Thank you so much