

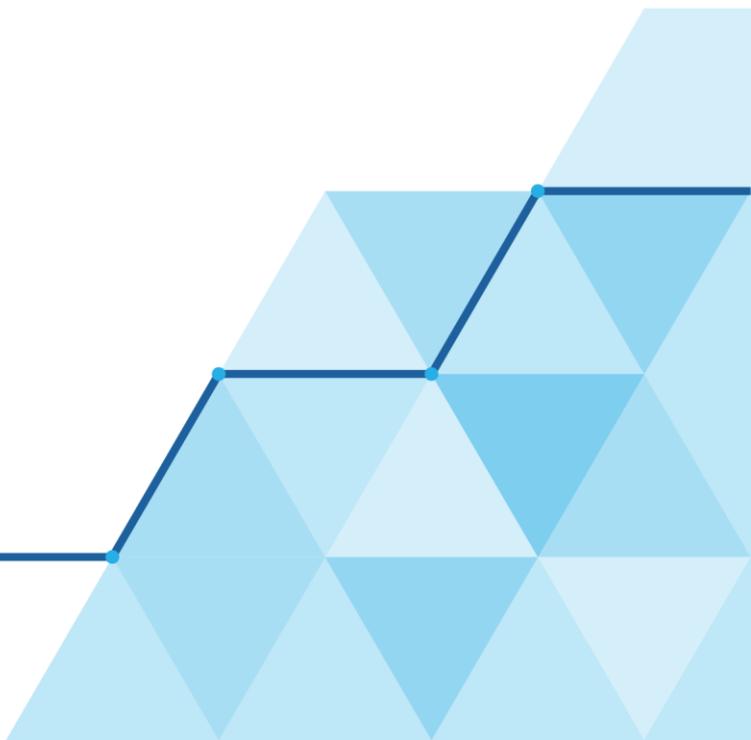


Ministry
of Justice

Outdoor Marriages and Civil Partnerships

Government response to the consultation on Outdoor Marriages and Civil Partnerships

This response is published on 15 March 2022

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Ministry
of Justice

Outdoor Marriages and Civil Partnerships

Response to consultation carried out by the Ministry of Justice.

This information is also available at <https://consult.justice.gov.uk/>

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Outdoor Marriages and Civil Partnerships
Consultation Response

Introduction and contact details

This document is the post-consultation report for the consultation paper, Outdoor Marriages and Civil Partnerships.

It will cover:

- the background to the report
- a summary of the responses to the report
- a detailed response to the specific questions raised in the report
- the next steps following this consultation.

Further copies of this report and the consultation paper can be obtained by contacting **the Marriage Policy Team** at the address below:

Family Justice Policy Division

Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
London SW1H 9AJ

Email: outdoorweddings@justice.gov.uk

This report is also available at <https://consult.justice.gov.uk/>

Alternative format versions of this publication can be requested from outdoorweddings@justice.gov.uk.

Complaints or comments

If you have any complaints or comments about the consultation process you should contact the Ministry of Justice at the above address.

Background

The consultation paper 'Outdoor Weddings and Civil Partnerships' was published on 20 December 2021. It invited comments on the Government's proposals to continue to permit outdoor civil marriages and civil partnerships on approved premises, and to permit outdoor religious marriages in the grounds of places of worship.

The consultation set out the Government's proposal to continue to allow outdoor civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies on approved premises. This policy has already been in effect since 1 July 2021, when the Government laid a Statutory Instrument ('SI') during the Covid-19 pandemic to give couples more choice of setting and to support the wedding and civil partnership sector. However, that SI has effect only until the end of 5 April 2022. The Government therefore proposed to lay a further SI that would come into effect when these changes expire and would continue to permit these outdoor civil marriage and civil partnership proceedings.

The paper also set out the Government's proposal to permit outdoor religious marriages in the grounds of places of worship, through a separate legislative reform order ('LRO'). This would allow couples seeking religious marriages at places of worship, as well as religious bodies, to benefit from similar increased flexibility and choice as those seeking civil marriages and civil partnerships on approved premises and help promote greater efficiency in the wedding sector.

It sought views from anyone affected by the proposals, including owners, trustees and other representatives of approved premises or prospective approved premises; representatives of authorities responsible for approvals of premises and for compliance with conditions that attach to approvals; representatives of marriage and civil partnership registration services sitting in local authorities; religious groups or bodies; owners or trustees of places of worship registered for solemnising marriages; authorised persons appointed under the Marriage Act 1949; celebrants; other individuals, companies or bodies involved in the wedding and civil partnership sector; couples who have had or were planning outdoor weddings/civil partnerships in England and Wales; and any other person affected or potentially affected by the proposals.

The consultation period closed on 24 January 2022 and this report summarises the responses, including how the consultation process influenced the final shape of the policy/proposal consulted upon.

The Impact Assessment accompanying the consultation was updated to take account of evidence provided by stakeholders during the consultation period. The updated Impact Assessment is attached.

Outdoor Marriages and Civil Partnerships
Consultation Response

A Welsh language response paper can be found at <https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/outdoor-marriages-civil-partnerships/>

A list of respondents is at Annex A.

Summary of responses

A total of 204¹ individual responses to the consultation paper were received. The breakdown of the different categories of respondent is as follows:

Option	Total	Percent
Owner, Trustee or Other Representative of Approved Premises or Premises Seeking to Become Approved, Or Which Might Seek to Become Approved	43	21.08%
Representative of Civil Marriage and Civil Partnership Registration Services Sitting in Local Authorities	33	16.18%
An Individual Who Participated in An Outdoor Civil Wedding/Civil Partnership Ceremony Following the 1 July 2021 Changes, Or an Individual Seeking to Do So in the Future	26	12.75%
A Celebrant	25	12.25%
Not Answered	17	8.33%
Other Individual or Representative of a Company or Body Involved in The Wedding and Civil Partnership Industry	15	7.35%
Representative of A Religious Body or Group	14	6.86%
Other Individual or Representative of a Company or Body Affected or Potentially Affected by This Proposal.	14	6.86%
Representative of An Authority Responsible for Approvals of Premises And/or For Compliance with Conditions That Attach to Approvals, Including Those That Attach to Linked Outdoor Areas	10	4.90%
An Authorised Person Under the Marriage Act 1949	6	2.94%
Owner or Trustee or A Registered Place of Worship for Solemnisation of Marriages	1	0.49%

Not all respondents answered every question. Some responded directly to the questions, some answered only parts of questions, and others commented more broadly on the overall content of the consultation rather than on our specific proposals. Each response,

¹ 606 email responses were received from supporters of Humanists UK, however as these were identical, they are counted for statistical purposes only as a single response. The Government acknowledges and has given due consideration to these email responses when preparing this response.

however, was read in its entirety, counted and categorised. Joint responses or responses on behalf of large membership groups were counted once. The figures reported here do not include those responses which did not address specific consultation questions, but the wider analysis of consultation feedback considered the views expressed.

Responses were analysed for evidence of impact of the proposals, experiences of the temporary civil ceremony SI, and levels of support among particular groups.

The following provides a brief summary of the responses:

- 96% of respondents believed that the provision for outdoor marriages and civil partnerships within the grounds of approved premises should continue beyond 5 April 2022 when the current provision expires.
- Reasons given in favour of continuing the provision by making a further SI were to continue to give couples and venues choice and flexibility; that guests, registrars and venue staff feel safer outdoors during the Covid-19 pandemic; that it prevents the need for a “fake” ceremony outdoors and a legal one indoors and that it allows couples to benefit from the beautiful outdoor settings around England and Wales. Most venues noted that outdoor ceremonies had been popular and that the demand is there for outdoor ceremonies during summer 2022.
- A minority of respondents expressed reservations about the necessity of conditions, in relation to what constitutes a suitable place for a ceremony (including health and safety considerations), the need to ensure that ceremonies remain dignified and that ceremonies must move indoors in case of inclement weather.
- There were multiple comments from venues and representatives of registration services about an issue they had faced resulting from the definition of “indoors” introduced by the temporary civil ceremony SI, especially relating to the use of marquees.
- 93% of respondents supported the Government’s proposal to permit outdoor religious weddings in the grounds of places of worship in which weddings must be held, so long as permitted by the respective religious body. It was noted by religious groups that while there was no theological obligation to conduct a wedding within the curtilage of a church, these changes must be permissive in nature, and that existing protections to safeguard religious freedoms need to remain. All representatives of religious groups who responded to the consultation were in support of this proposal.

Humanist email responses

- The 606 identical emails received from humanists, or supporters of humanists, expressed support for the Government's proposals and welcomed the reforms as enhancing freedom of choice for couples and venues. This support was also expressed in relation to the proposals to provide outdoor wedding ceremonies to couples seeking religious marriages in the grounds of religious venues via a separate legislative reform order, and to the proposed approvals process of the grounds of those places of worship.
- However, humanist respondents strongly advocated for the extension of legal recognition to Humanist marriages in addition to these proposals, in order to give humanist couples, the same opportunity to marry in ceremonies according to their beliefs as is already possible for couples seeking religious marriages. Potential economic benefits and equalities issues were cited in support.
- The consultation document had set out matters being covered by the Law Commission review that were not within the scope of the consultation. The consultation was limited to seeking input on the Government's proposed policy as set out in the consultation paper.
- When the Government announced the temporary measures for civil ceremonies in June 2021, we had also committed to laying a further instrument to make the changes permanent in Spring 2022. The Government had also at that point undertook to legislate to enable outdoor religious marriage when parliamentary time allowed. Reforms to permit outdoor religious wedding ceremonies were then proposed in the consultation paper in order to provide similar choice and flexibility for couples seeking a civil or religious wedding by allow these ceremonies to take place outdoors. No change to fundamental marriage law more widely was proposed in the consultation paper.

Responses to specific questions

1. Have you had experience with an outdoor ceremony on the grounds of approved premises since 1 July 2021? What worked well or did not work well?

84% of respondents to this question had experience of an outdoor ceremony on the grounds of approved premises since 1 July 2021. Of these, a large majority have had a positive experience of these ceremonies, citing:

- increased flexibility and choice for both venues and couples;
- registrars, guests and venue staff feeling safer during the Covid-19 pandemic;
- the ability to use and benefit from beautiful outdoor settings around England and Wales;
- popularity with couples;
- that for venues with outdoor grounds, it enabled them to widen their offer and become more appealing to couples;
- that it prevents the need for a “fake” ceremony outdoors and a legal one indoors, saving time and money.

Things that didn't work well were:

- British weather, making it necessary to move indoors, and couples occasionally being unwilling to do so;
- problems not hearing the proceedings properly due to outside noise, notably from nearby roads;
- the inability to use marquees and gazebos which are more than 50% enclosed due to the definition of “indoors” contained in the temporary civil ceremony SI;
- reservations about the necessity of conditions, in relation to what constitutes a suitable place for a ceremony (including health and safety considerations).

There were multiple comments from venues and representatives of registration services regarding the definition of “indoors”, and what type of structure would be considered ‘outdoors’. The effect of this definition is that a structure is considered to be ‘indoors’ if it is more than 50% enclosed, meaning that semi-permanent structures such as marquees could be used when the flaps at the sides were rolled up, but not if these were rolled down (for example, in case of bad weather). This uncertainty was felt to cause confusion and frustration on the day of the ceremony.

2. Have you had experience planning for or seeking an outdoor ceremony on the grounds of approved premises since 1 July 2021? What worked well or did not work well?

Of the respondents who had had experience of an outdoor ceremony on the grounds of approved premises since 1 July 2021, a large majority had a positive experience planning or seeking an outdoor wedding and hadn't encountered any issues in the planning process. Some noted that venues had been flexible and that they had provided couples with a backup room inside the building in case of inclement weather.

A few respondents added that having an outdoor ceremony meant that they could accommodate more guests, especially during the time in which Covid-19 restrictions prevented groups of a certain size from gathering indoors. Venues said it opened up more areas for them to use, making them more attractive to couples.

A minority of respondents noted that uncertainty around weather made the planning experience more stressful. There were some who were planning a wedding in summer 2022 and were unsure whether they could move forward with outdoor ceremonies due to the temporary civil ceremony SI expiring in April.

3. Have you had experience applying for approval or renewal of approval of premises with linked outdoor areas since 1 July 2021? What worked well or did not work well?

Most respondents had not had experience applying for approval or renewal of approval since 1 July 2021. The majority of those who had experience of this said that the process was easy, and they didn't encounter any issues. Representatives of registration services sitting in local authorities also noted this process was easy and worked well. One noted that they had not noticed any difference in applications due to the current regulations being time limited. Issues raised were difficulties defining the areas where the ceremony is allowed to take place under the "license provisions", and the need for a backup room inside in case of inclement weather.

One representative of registration services remarked that due to the fact that "licences can be issued up to a year in advance of the renewal date, local authorities are now approving outdoor spaces until April, and the Licencing department is licencing them from, potentially, 6 months after then. This leaves a gap when the venues really don't know where they stand, and that this situation could result in significant reputational damage to the Local Authority."

Another noted that "(t)he greatest issue in this area is trying to explain to venues and couples that being outside doesn't mean unlimited numbers. Venues must still follow

numbers set in their risk assessment as guests are still using the venue facilities such as parking and toilets, so even if the venue's gardens are vast, they cannot exceed the numbers stated on their risk assessments.”

4. Do you have any other comments on how the current provisions allowing outdoor civil marriages and civil partnerships to take place on approved premises have worked since coming into force on 1 July 2021? Do you have any comments on how the proposal to continue these changes might work?

Respondents expressed their support for the continuation of the provisions allowing outdoor ceremonies, citing the benefits laid out in Q1.

Other points raised included ensuring that a suitable risk assessment had been carried out, the importance of ensuring that there was an alternative room available that could accommodate all guests in case of bad weather and the importance of the ceremony remaining a solemn and dignified occasion. A small number of registrars raised the issue that couples were sometimes unwilling to move their ceremony indoors in case of bad weather, however most registrars felt like their ability to do their jobs was not affected by the ceremony being outside. One representative of a registration service asked for limitations or approvals to be placed on the specific area where weddings can take place, and another mentioned that they had imposed specific conditions for their venues, such as providing shade and shelter for the couple and registrar in case of hot weather.

Another noted that “The process has worked well, however the process has been costly for local authority Registration Services. Each time this has been applied for we have had to send a senior staff member to assess the area and subsequently approve it. Following on from this our Licensing Officer has then needed to complete the relevant paperwork. Currently all of this work is having to be done for free, which is not sustainable in a cost recovery service. The process is similar to adding a new internal room, which we are permitted to charge for, so this is an anomaly.”²

² We wish to clarify that there was no requirement in the temporary SI for local authority registration services to visit the outdoor area ahead of the ceremony (though this is of course recommended to help ensure that issues do not arise on the day of the ceremony), and we do not propose to change this for the indefinite SI. Currently approved premises are deemed to include their “linked outdoor areas”, new applications would not need to be submitted in order for ceremonies to be held in the linked outdoor areas within the boundaries of the property. Any new applications for approval, or for renewals of approval, would automatically extend not just to the built premises, but also to the linked outdoor areas, therefore would not require a supplemental visit to assess the outdoor area alone. To ensure the “seemly and dignified” condition is fulfilled, however, prior confirmation must be secured from the superintendent registrar, though the visit to obtain this could take place on the day of the ceremony, or at another convenient date, and wouldn’t necessarily always require a standalone visit.

Some representatives of religious groups added that the changes should be extended to religious weddings, and celebrants and humanists (in great number) asked that celebrant-led and humanist marriages be legalised in addition to the outdoor ceremony proposals. A small number of celebrants raised concerns about the impact that the proposal would have on their livelihood, as outdoor weddings are a major driver for celebrant-led ceremonies.

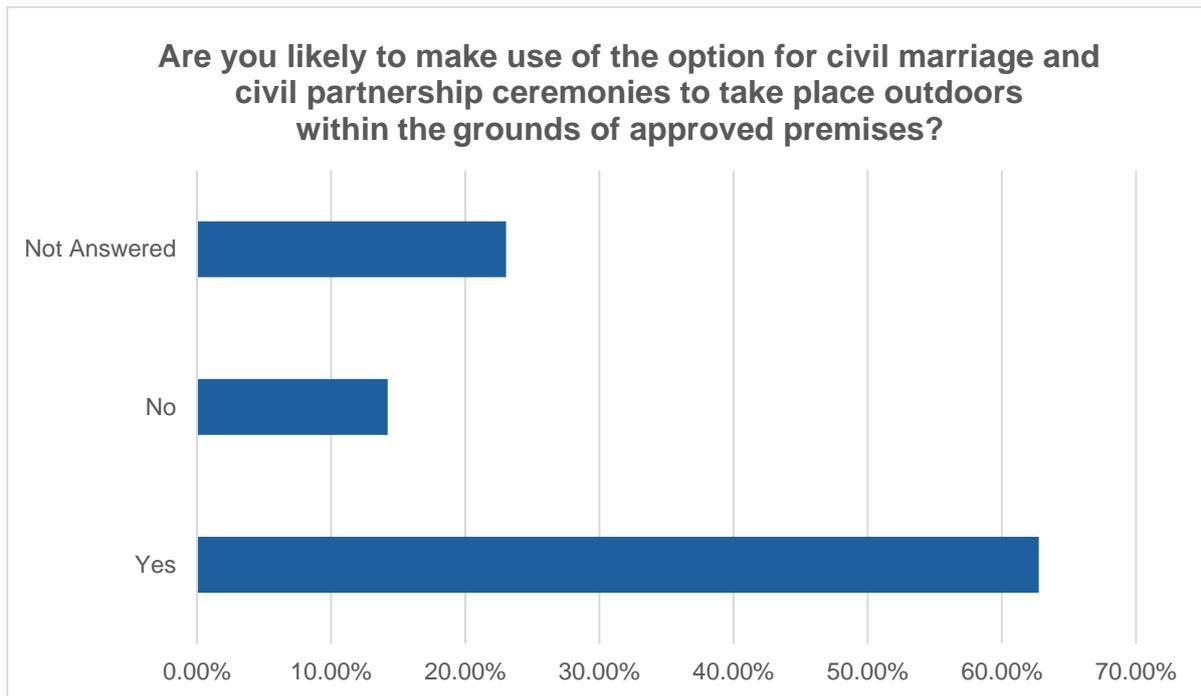
5. Do you believe that the provision for outdoor marriages and civil partnerships within the grounds of approved premises should continue beyond 5 April 2022 when the current provision expires? Please provide reasons for your answer.

96% of respondents to this question believed that the provision for outdoor marriages and civil partnerships within the grounds of approved premises should continue beyond 5 April 2022 when the current provision expires. Reasons given in favour of continuing the provision by making a further SI were to continue to give couples and venues choice and flexibility, that guests, registrars and venue staff feel safer outdoors during the Covid-19 pandemic, that it prevents the need for a “fake” ceremony outdoors and a legal one indoors and that it allows couples to benefit from the beautiful outdoor settings around England and Wales. Most venues noted that outdoor ceremonies had been popular, and that the demand is there for outdoor ceremonies for summer 2022. They noted it would support local businesses who have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

A minority of respondents expressed reservations about the necessity of conditions, in relation to what constitutes a suitable place for a ceremony (including health and safety considerations), the need ensure that ceremonies remain dignified and that ceremonies must move indoors in case of inclement weather. Celebrants and humanists supported the continuation of the SI, however also suggested that these further provisions should also be temporary, as a stepping stone to the Law Commission’s recommendations.

However, it was noted that the role of registrars to ensure the ceremony remained appropriate was key and that guidance on outdoor weddings and civil partnerships needed to be clear on what constituted a suitable place for a ceremony, and that inclement weather plans were necessary. With the abolition of physical registers, it was also noted that registration officers have more scope to be flexible in relation to the location of ceremonies.

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- 6. Are you likely to make use of the option for civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies to take place outdoors within the grounds of approved premises?**
- a. **If yes, what factors make this likely?**
 - b. **If not, what would prevent you from making use of the provision?**



63% of respondents said they would make use of the provisions for outdoor ceremonies. A large majority of representatives of venues said they would make use of it in order to use their grounds, and because there was demand from couples. Representatives of registration services also said they would make use of the provisions due to demand from couples and venues.

14% said they wouldn't make use of the provisions. Reasons cited for this were that the respondent was already married or because they would seek a religious wedding.

Several couples noted that they were planning a wedding in summer 2022 and that they want an outdoor wedding which would not be possible if the current temporary legislation expires.

7. Do you have any comments on the guidance that Government issued to accompany the statutory instrument which came into force on 1 July 2021? Could it be improved, and if so, how?

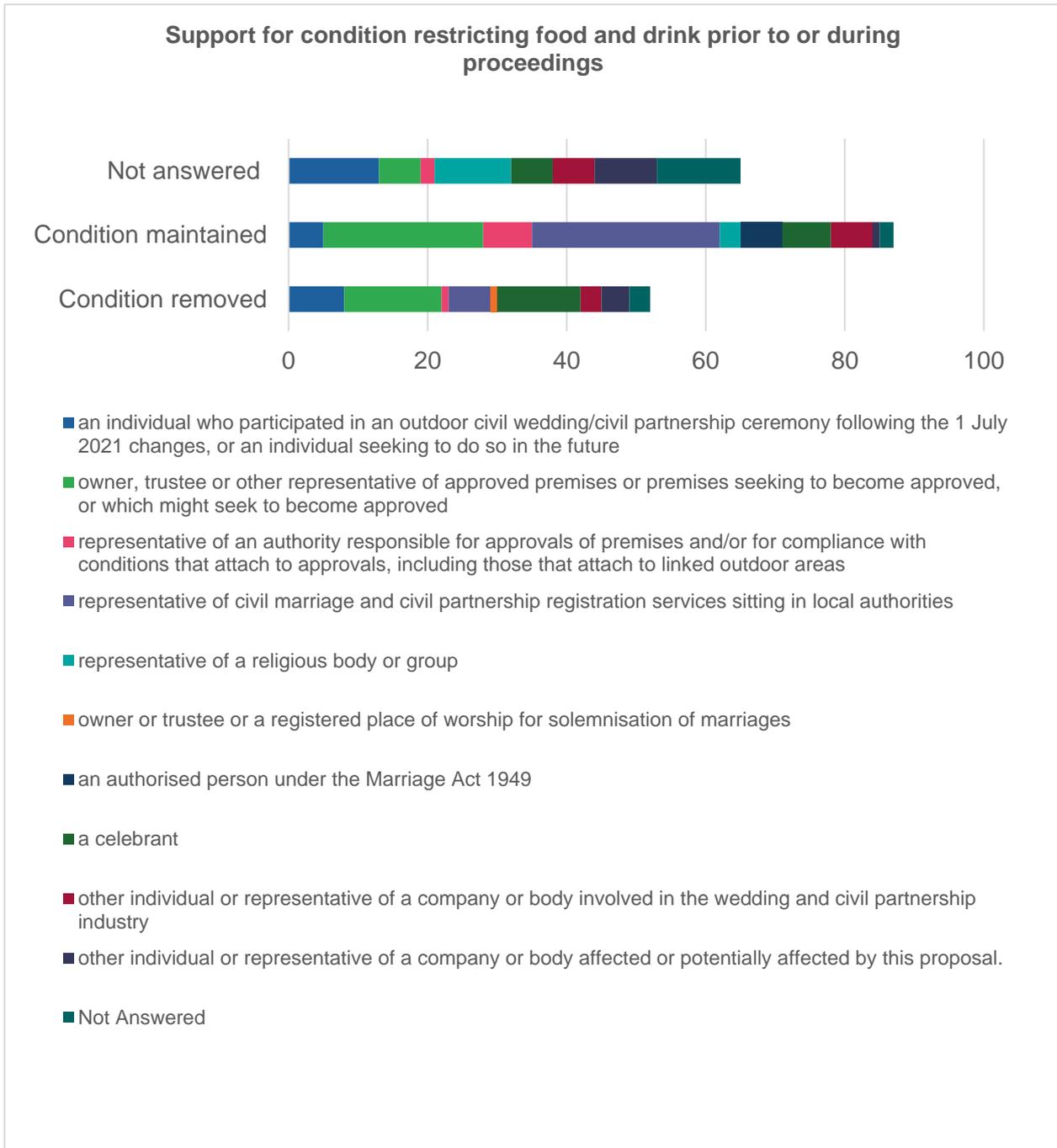
The majority of respondents were happy with the guidance, however 28 respondents said improvements were needed. Some recommended improvements included clarity on the use of semi-permanent structures such as marquees, and clearer guidance on what constitutes inclement weather.

Representatives of approved premises were largely happy with the guidance, although some noted they had not seen it or that it had been published too late.

The majority of representatives of an authority responsible for approvals of premises, or of registration services said that the guidance was clear.

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- 8. There is currently a condition restricting the sale of food or alcoholic drinks prior to the proceedings, whether in the relevant room in the built premises or when gathering outdoors for the purposes of the proceedings. (The consumption of non-alcoholic drinks is permitted in the room or outdoor location prior to the proceedings is permitted, as is food or drink consumed as part of any religious ceremony that takes place prior to the proceedings.)**
- a. Do you have any experience with or comments on this condition?
 - b. Do you have any comments on the proposal to retain this condition? The condition in the July SI is not specific as to what is meant by gathering for the purpose of the proceedings – do you have any comments on this and whether it should refer to the place within the outdoor grounds in which the proceedings are to be held?
 - c. Do you agree that the condition should apply whether the proceedings take place inside a room in the built premises or in a place within the linked outdoor area? Please give reasons for your answer.
 - d. Are your answers the same or different whether the linked outdoor areas are religious premises or non-religious premises?

43% of respondents were in favour of maintaining the condition currently in place stipulating that no food or drink may be sold to or permitted to be consumed by people when gathering for the purposes of proceedings or during the proceedings. 25% were in favour of the condition being removed, and 31% of consultees did not answer this question. Therefore, of those who did answer this question, 63% were in favour of maintaining the condition. The main reasons cited for this were to ensure that ceremonies remained seemly and dignified, that it reflected the solemnity of the occasion, to ensure that couples were marrying with their full mental capacity and to avoid drunken guests. It was also noted by some respondents that there was plenty of time after the ceremony for food and drinks. Some respondents noted they had had experiences of guests or the marrying couple being drunk who were difficult to manage.



One respondent noted that “The prohibition to consume alcohol prior to the proceedings also allows those who have been coerced into marriage to speak up and for the celebrant to notice any behaviour that identifies a sham marriage which might otherwise be put down or excused due to drunkenness”.

Reasons given in favour of removing the condition were that the rules felt unnecessarily prescriptive, that it was difficult to police, and that couples should be able to choose what they served guests. Some asked that it only applies to the immediate area of the ceremony.

Overall, all groups, apart from individuals who participated in an outdoor ceremony or an are seeking to do so in the future, and celebrants, were in favour of the condition being maintained.

One respondent suggested that this rule could be restricted to only the couple and witnesses, and others suggested that there should be more clarity on how far in advance of the ceremony the restriction applies, and in what area the rules applies (i.e. whether it applied to the whole outdoor area). Another noted that in an outdoor space it can be difficult to determine what area of the garden/open space comes under the condition of restricting the sale of food or alcoholic drink.

The majority of respondents agreed that the condition should apply whether the proceedings take place inside a room in the built premises or in a place within the linked outdoor area, saying that if it applies to one space it should apply to all.

Religious groups noted that these conditions should continue in order to ensure that couples are marrying with full use of their mental capacities and able to make a responsible decision in an important legally binding occasion.

9. Do you have any further comments or observations you wish to add?

Comments included further expressions of support for the continuation of the provision for outdoor weddings and asking for the further SI to be implemented as soon as possible.

Religious groups asked that there be more engagement with religious groups in relation to outdoor religious weddings, notably with the Archbishop's Council.

Additional questions for venues (to the extent not already covered by responses above):

10. Have you offered or held outdoor ceremonies on your premises since 1 July 2021?

- a. What has the level of interest been? Please provide data where available.**
- b. What worked well or did not work well?**

The majority of respondents to this question had offered or held outdoor ceremonies. The majority of these said there had been interest, with outdoor ceremonies making their venues more attractive. Respondents stated that in their venues, outdoor ceremonies accounted for between 30-100% of the weddings they hosted and multiple respondents noted that they had also seen interest for such weddings in 2022.

Others said there had been moderate to low interest, or that they had not been actively promoting the option to couples as they knew the legislation was temporary.

Respondents noted that the majority of weddings are booked far in advance, so the short-term and short-notice nature of the SI meant uptake did not increase dramatically for many venues. Respondents suggested that if greater notice had been provided of the provisions of the SI, infrastructure could have been put in place to facilitate a greater number of outdoor ceremonies and advertise this option to couples.

Nearly all respondents to this question said outdoor ceremonies worked well, referencing the flexibility provided, the ability to be close to nature and the additional options for locations that the legislation provided.

Those who said outdoor ceremonies had not worked well noted the dependency on good weather and the unhappiness of registrars to travel to outdoor locations or being unaware of the rules.

11. Did the temporary nature of the initial SI (i.e. the fact that the 1 July 2021 changes were going to expire on 5 April 2022) deter you from holding outdoor ceremonies, or from applying for approval of your premises?

- a. Are you aware of whether couples were interested in but deterred from choosing an outdoor ceremony by the temporary nature of the initial SI? Please provide data where available.
- b. Are you more likely to take up the opportunity now that the proposed SI would not be time-limited?

76% of respondents to this question said that the temporary nature of the SI didn't deter venues from holding outdoor ceremonies. Reasons given were that the application process was simple, that the demand was there and the ability to offer a safe environment during the Covid-19 pandemic and social distancing regulations.

The majority of respondents were also not aware of couples being deterred from choosing an outdoor ceremony by the temporary nature of the initial SI. However, it was noted that couples who want an outdoor wedding in summer 2022 are unsure whether to go ahead due to the expiring regulations, and so may be organising indoor ceremonies instead. The earlier point that weddings are often booked years in advance was repeated.

Multiple respondents suggested that any announcement on making the changes permanent would have much greater impact if announced soon, as couples are already booking venues for summer 2023 ceremonies, and couples and venues alike require certainty over legal restrictions to be able to make appropriate plans moving forward.

Respondents also noted that it is difficult to explain complex legislative changes to potential couples and for venues to understand exactly what they are allowed to provide.

The weather was also repeatedly raised as a deterrent, in contributing to uncertainty over whether ceremonies could go ahead, with particular reference made to the 'inclement weather' provision in the guidance being confusing.

Many venues said they are likely to take up the opportunity now the provisions wouldn't be time-limited and indicated that they would promote the option more to couples if greater certainty on whether outdoor ceremonies would be permitted after 6 April 2022 were provided.

Others indicated that they would look to expand the number of locations in which ceremonies could be offered and would invest in significant infrastructure improvement to make outdoor options more appealing to couples.

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- 12. Were there/do you anticipate any additional revenues or costs associated with facilitating outdoor civil marriages or civil partnerships? Please provide as much information as practicable about these additional revenues or costs.**
- a. Did you invest in additional infrastructure?**
 - b. Do you consider that any additional costs are commercially worthwhile, or a deterrent to providing outdoor ceremonies?**

The majority of venues said they did anticipate additional costs, including sound systems, lighting, wedding coordinators, furniture and time to set up. Other additional costs included additional health and safety measures, the need for more wedding coordinators to ensure that guests avoid dangerous areas in the outdoor grounds, new furniture and the preparation of additional outdoor spaces such as decoration.

If the changes were made permanent some respondents noted they would invest more on infrastructure including awnings and shelter.

However, a few mentioned that this cost could be passed onto the client (one response indicated that the venue charges a flat rate of an additional 25% to reflect additional work for set up).

A few said they had seen increased revenue from more couples booking ceremonies at their venue. The majority said they didn't anticipate any significant increase in revenue.

The vast majority of respondents who were representatives of venues considered the additional costs to be commercially worthwhile due to an expected long-term increase in

business. Reasons cited included that it encourages more couples to book weddings with them, increases interest in the venue and is more attractive to couples.

13. For civil wedding or civil partnership venues with or without approved premises status:

- a. **How would the proposal to continue to permit outdoor ceremonies impact your administrative processes in organising outdoor weddings/civil partnership ceremonies? Please provide examples.**
- b. **How would the proposal impact costs faced by your venue in organising outdoor weddings/civil partnership ceremonies? Please provide examples.**
- c. **What effect would the proposal have on time spent organising outdoor weddings/civil partnership ceremonies?**

All venues said that there would be minimal or no change to administrative processes or time spent organising ceremonies.

Those minimal changes mentioned referenced the increased number of locations for ceremonies as requiring more record keeping and setup costs, and slight increase in workload in advertising another space to couples.

The majority of respondents said that there would be minimal to no increased costs beyond the purchase of additional seating and tables, which many had already done due to previous Covid-19 restrictions, and potentially more staff.

14. Have you experienced any practical benefits or difficulties flowing from the conditions for use of linked outdoor areas for ceremonies? (The proposal to continue these conditions is discussed on pages 11-13 of this paper. The conditions are also listed again below for reference). If you have not yet had any experience with the conditions, do you anticipate any difficulties or benefits? Please provide detail.

- a. **Requirement to secure confirmation that the location is seemly and dignified (see page 11 of this paper);**
- b. **Requirement that the location be identifiable by description (see page 12 of this paper);**
- c. **Requirement for a suitable notice to be displayed with certain information (see page 12 of this paper);**
- d. **Restrictions relating to the consumption and sale of food and drink (see page 12 of this paper). (See also question 8)**

84% respondents didn't observe any specific benefits or problems with these conditions.

Regarding question 14a, two comments suggested the necessity of the local authority to check that these conditions were fulfilled, and about areas being dangerous (e.g. ponds).

Regarding question 14b, no issues were mentioned, respondents generally agreed that it was simple to fulfil this condition.

Regarding question 14c, one respondent mentioned couples not liking the signage provided and suggested a generic sign, whilst another considered whether a visit from a registrar was needed to check whether the sign fully complied with the condition.

Regarding question 14d, the majority of responses said they were happy with these restrictions, though a minority said either they or couples who had booked a ceremony at their venue wanted this condition removed to allow greater freedom (see also summary of responses to question 8, above).

15. Have you had any experience applying the definition of “indoors” (i.e. as opposed to outdoors) or do you anticipate any difficulties with this in practice?

The majority of respondents noted no issues applying the definition so long as the guidance is very clear. The need for clear, common-sense and understandable guidance communicated in good time was very important to many.

Others mentioned that it would be better if all areas within the boundary of a site are licensed without the need to identify specific rooms and that applying the condition to marquees was particularly complex.

16. Venues may wish to have a suitable ‘Plan B’ available in the event of inclement weather. This may be an outdoor covered structure within the linked outdoor areas, or an indoor room that is itself ‘approved premises. Do you foresee, or have you had experience with any challenges associated with alternative provision for inclement weather? Could this influence or has this influenced decisions to offer or not offer outdoor ceremonies?

Many responses highlighted potential issues where poor weather and the lack of an alternative approved space could result in some weddings not being able to go ahead.

Others noted that they already had multiple indoor areas which could be used as alternative venues, as well as outside covered spaces such as gazebos and marquees or even just the use of umbrellas.

Clarity over what is classed as 'inclement' weather was suggested as important, with venues noting that changing the location of the ceremony due to inclement weather impacts couples more significantly than the venues themselves. The potential for conflicts with registrars over whether weddings should be moved indoors was noted.

17. In order to offer contingency space in case of inclement weather, would you plan to provide contingency outdoor arrangements in order to keep your indoor space free to host additional ceremonies, or would you plan to keep your existing indoor structure(s) vacant for this purpose? If you planned contingency outdoor arrangements, what would these be? Would they meet the proposed definition of "outdoors" or would they be enclosed or substantially enclosed and therefore "indoors" according to the proposed definition (See the Glossary)?

The vast majority of respondents indicated that they would plan to keep existing indoor structures vacant for this purpose.

Some respondents mentioned that for reasons of exclusivity they do not run two weddings on the same weekend let alone concurrently so would definitely leave the indoor space vacant. Others mentioned having a marquee or tipi style structure as a backup.

Respondents responsible for multiple venues noted that contingency plans will vary between venues, with some offering indoor space and others requiring a complete change in venue. These would be stated clearly to couples by venues, so respondents believe that this does not need to be subject to regulation.

Proposed outdoor religious marriages legislative reform order

18. Do you support the Government's proposal to permit outdoor religious weddings in the grounds of places of worship in which weddings must be held, so long as permitted by the respective religious body? Please give reasons for your answer.

93% of respondents supported the Government's proposal to permit outdoor religious weddings in the grounds of places of worship in which weddings must be held, so long as permitted by the respective religious body. All representatives of religious groups who responded to the consultation were in support of this proposal.

Reasons in favour of this proposal were that it would deliver fairness and parity with civil marriages, and that it would provide flexibility and choice to couples and places of worship in how they want to carry out weddings while ensuring the ceremony reflects their faith. It was noted by religious groups that while there was no theological obligation to conduct a wedding within the curtilage of a church these changes must be permissive in nature, and that existing protections to safeguard religious freedoms need to remain. One noted that they supported the proposals with the caveat that the Government give more details on how an “opt-in” system will operate for religious bodies.

Reasons against the proposal were the potential unsuitability of the grounds (due to graveyards or lack of outdoor space) asked that it should only be taken forward if provision should be made for legal humanist and celebrant-led marriages.

19. Are you likely to make use of the option for religious ceremonies to take place outdoors within the grounds of places of worship?

- a. If yes, what factors make this likely?**
- b. If not, what would prevent you from making use of the provision?**

44% respondents to this question would make use of this option.

Religious groups noted that if couples ask for it, they would like to be able to provide for it. A representative of the Church of England noted that widespread use of the provision was unlikely as they believe the great majority of couples who marry in church do so precisely because they want ceremony to take place in the church itself.

The majority of those who wouldn't make use of the provisions were either non-religious, already married or non-religious venues. Other reasons given were that the outdoor grounds of their place of worship are inadequate, or that it was the building itself that was important to them.

20. Do you support the proposals:

- a. to deem churches and chapels of the Church of England and the Church in Wales to include automatically their outdoor grounds so that marriages can be solemnised in these grounds if the respective Church permits?**
- b. to deem current registrations of places of worship for other faiths (other than Jewish and Quaker faiths) to include automatically their outdoor grounds so that marriages can be solemnised in these grounds if the respective religious body permits?**
- c. that any new applications for registration of places of worship would extend to the outdoor grounds automatically, but that householders should certify that they desire that the registration extend to the outdoor grounds, and that**

consents of relevant governing authorities should also extend to the outdoor grounds?

There was near unanimous support for the Government's proposals regarding the approvals processes, which include the deeming of places of worship to automatically include their outdoor grounds, so that marriages can be solemnised in these grounds. This also included the proposal that new applications for registration of places of worship would extend to the outdoor grounds automatically, but that householders should certify that they desire that the registration extend to the outdoor grounds, and that consents of relevant governing authorities should also extend to the outdoor grounds. It was noted that this would bring the provisions for religious marriage in line with civil marriages.

The Church of Wales noted that not all churches had appropriate grounds for outdoor weddings, therefore asked that it not be put in a position where it had a legal obligation to marry a couple outdoors where it was inappropriate to do so, suggesting that this would be most easily achieved by a provision similar to sections 5B(1) and 5B(2) of the Marriage Act 1949 – e.g. a clause making it clear that no clergyman is obliged to solemnise a marriage outside and no incumbent is obliged to make their church grounds available for such a marriage.

Concerns raised included that local authorities should be involved confirming outdoor areas are safe, and that it could cause disturbance for local households and potential for noise disruption in places of dense housing.

21. Do you anticipate there being any difficulties identifying or using the outdoor grounds to a place of worship?

The majority of respondents didn't see any difficulties identifying or using the outdoor grounds.

However, some mentioned that certain places of worship, notably in cities, may not have appropriate grounds either due to lack of space or due to burial grounds, and that churches would have to make provisions for safe access, health and safety. A representative from the Church of England foresaw difficulties arising if a couple insist on a wedding in the church grounds but the minister deems the available ground unsuitable, underlining the necessity of the provisions being permissive rather than prescriptive.

Historic Houses noted that chapels of historic houses and estates are often integrated into bigger buildings and structures, and as such do not have a dedicated or specific outdoor area or grounds. As such, it becomes hard to define what are the outdoor grounds of a place of worship as opposed to the outdoor grounds of a wider building. Opening this up to simply outdoor religious ceremonies would avoid this particular issue; otherwise generous guidelines would be necessary.

22. Do you support the Government’s proposal not to introduce any conditions for the use of outdoor ground; comparable to those imposed for civil ceremonies?

The majority of respondents to this question (74%) were in favour of not introducing any conditions for the use of outdoor grounds comparable to those imposed for civil ceremonies.

Those that were not in favour said that there should be limitations on alcohol consumption, health and safety, noise levels, or that the same conditions as civil weddings should be introduced to ensure parity.

23. Would the availability of outdoor weddings for religious ceremonies under Proposal 2 impact whether or not you choose to marry using a religious ceremony?

25% of respondents said that the availability of outdoor weddings for religious ceremonies under Proposal 2 would impact whether they would choose to marry using a religious ceremony, saying that outdoor religious weddings would make religious weddings more attractive.

Reasons given for this impacting choice of ceremony were that they were not religious, or already married.

24. Do you have any further comments or observations you wish to add?

Respondents reiterated their support for the proposal. Humanists and independent celebrants asked that celebrant-led and humanist marriages be legalised as well.

Additional questions for religious bodies or other owners or trustees of places of worship (to the extent not already covered by responses above):

25. Do you anticipate any additional revenues or other non-monetary benefits associated with facilitating outdoor religious marriages? Please provide as much information as practicable about these.

a. Would you invest in additional infrastructure?

b. Do you consider that any additional costs are a deterrent to providing outdoor ceremonies?

Of those who responded, most said that they would anticipate additional revenues as couples will have more options for their ceremony.

Any additional costs would be to provide technical equipment for sound outdoors, suitable seating and decorative pieces, and marquees. The Church in Wales indicated that they would not centrally invest in additional infrastructure, but individual churches might. The Church in Wales noted that as there is a single national fee for all their weddings, there would be no mechanism for individual churches to recover these costs through additional fees.

Others indicated that whilst additional costs were to be expected, these were acceptable as the improvements would result in additional revenue from the predicted increased number of wedding bookings.

26. In order to offer contingency space in case of inclement weather, would you plan to provide contingency outdoor arrangements in order to keep your indoor space free to host additional ceremonies, or would you plan to keep your existing indoor structure(s) vacant for this purpose? If you planned contingency outdoor arrangements, what would these be? Would they meet the proposed definition of “outdoors” or would they be enclosed or substantially enclosed and therefore “indoors” according to the proposed definition (See the Glossary)?

Most religious groups who answered this question stated that they would not carry out two ceremonies simultaneously and would keep the church indoor space free in case of inclement weather.

27. Would you anticipate:

- a. any changes to your administrative processes in organising an outdoor wedding as opposed to an indoor one? Please provide examples.
- b. any costs faced by your organisation/place of worship in organising an outdoor wedding to be any different to an indoor one?
- c. that organising a wedding outdoors as opposed to indoors as any quicker or slower?

No respondents anticipated any changes to the administrative process, speed or costs in organising an outdoor wedding.

Equalities (relating to both civil and religious ceremonies)

28. In addition to the ways in which your responses to the questions above touch on any impacts that you experienced as a person who has, or member of a group that shares, one or more protected characteristics, are there any other impacts that you have experienced or anticipate the proposal will have on those with protected characteristics? Please give reasons.

- a. Do you agree that we have correctly identified the range and extent of the equalities impacts under these proposals set out in this consultation (see in particular page 46? Please give reasons and supply evidence of further equalities impacts as appropriate.**
- b. Do you anticipate any equalities impacts from the scope of these proposals (see ‘Scope’ sections under Proposals 1 and 2)?**
- c. Are there forms of mitigation in relation to equalities impacts that we have not considered?**

A large majority of respondents agreed that we had correctly identified the range and extent of the equalities impacts under these proposals. Humanists respondents disagreed (see below).

Some respondents noted that the financial aspects of registrar fees as well as celebrant fees might influence the choice of ceremony by those with financial restrictions.

Accessibility for disabled or less mobile individuals was also raised as a concern for outdoor ceremonies, particularly in the case of venues with large grounds. Paths for those in wheelchairs or using walking aids were emphasised as important. Health and safety considerations were also raised. However, it was noted that these same issues can and do arise with indoor ceremonies and venues too.

Other respondents requested greater flexibility for religious services, stating that at present non-religious services have a distinct advantage in the scope of venues available for ceremonies. It was noted that the potential extension of provisions to religious ceremonies would help to minimise the inequality that currently exists. Furthermore, the proposals were considered to increase options for LGBT or same-sex couples who may not feel comfortable or able to marry in a religious setting.

Although the consultation document was available in Welsh, one respondent noted disappointment that there did not appear to be opportunity to answer the consultation online in Welsh.

Finally, six individual respondents identifying as humanists claimed that the proposed reforms, particularly those in relation to the legislative reform order to provide for outdoor religious marriage, were discriminatory against their Humanist beliefs, as Humanist ceremonies would still not be legally recognised³. Halso felt that the discrimination caused

⁴ e.g. the automatic deeming of currently approved premises to include “linked outdoor areas”, and that new approvals and renewals would automatically include linked outdoor areas

by not permitting legally recognised marriages according to humanist beliefs was more severe for LGBT people, who they say are disproportionately likely to be non-religious and humanist. They felt the lack of choice afforded to people seeking a same-sex marriage is more acute than for people seeking an opposite-sex marriage.

Impact Assessment, Equalities and Welsh Language

Impact Assessment

An initial Impact Assessment was published alongside the consultation document. It set out the estimated impact that the proposals would have if they were implemented and this has now been updated based on the consultation responses. It indicates that wedding and civil partnership venues with suitable outdoor areas, religious bodies that solemnise marriage, and owners or trustees of buildings registered as places of worship are likely to be particularly affected by the measures proposed in this paper. It has not been possible to monetise the impacts of the proposals put forward.

Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was published alongside the consultation document. From our analysis of all responses, we believe that the proposals to continue the provision of outdoor civil marriages and civil partnerships will not lead to direct discrimination, as they do not result in people being treated less favourably because of any protected characteristic. The EIA has been updated based on additional information supplied by respondents to the consultation, including the concerns raised by humanist respondents.

Welsh Language Impact Test

One response noted that although the consultation document was provided in Welsh on the online portal, there was no option to provide consultation responses in Welsh online. Although it was not specifically stated that responses to individual questions could not be provided in Welsh, greater clarity could have been provided in this area.

The consultation response will be translated into the Welsh language and published alongside the English version, reflecting the process followed in the consultation document release.

We welcome responses to consultations in Welsh and will endeavour to clarify that responses in Welsh are always very welcome in future.

Outdoor Marriages and Civil Partnerships
Consultation Response

Conclusion and next steps

The Government has carefully considered all responses to this consultation. Respondents were overwhelmingly in favour of continuing the provision of outdoor civil marriages and civil partnerships, therefore it remains the Government's intention to make a further indefinite SI when the temporary civil ceremony SI expires on 5 April 2022. The amendments to the Marriages and Civil Partnership (Approved Premises) Regulation 2005 made by this further SI will be substantially similar to those made by the temporary SI, with the exception of a few key changes which are discussed below.

Respondents were also in favour of the proposal to extend the provision of outdoor ceremonies to religious marriages, on a permissive basis via an LRO. The Government will therefore take these proposals forward.

The Government has considered the large volume of responses to the consultation which were received from individuals sharing humanist beliefs. Those responses were clear in their support for the proposal to continue the provision of outdoor civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies and to extend similar provision in relation to religious weddings via a legislative reform order.

In addition to expressing support for the proposals, however, respondents who share Humanist beliefs were very clear that they wish for the Government to also extend legal recognition to Humanist marriages.

The Government remains committed to considering further and more fundamental reform in this area once the Law Commission's report is published in July 2022, which will contain detailed recommendations for a revised scheme for marriages which will be fair to all groups. We expect the report to include proposals which would remove the link between marriages and the buildings in which they may currently be solemnised, including recommendations for a new framework that could allow non-religious belief organisations (such as Humanists) and/or independent celebrants to conduct legally binding weddings. The Government will carefully consider the Law Commission's report and will decide on future reform, including in relation to humanist marriage, in light of those recommendations.

Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships SI

Overall, respondents were happy with how the changes introduced by the temporary civil ceremony SI worked in practice and had positive experiences of outdoor ceremonies, and

many said they would make use of the option for outdoor ceremonies should the provision become permanent.

The majority of respondents were happy with the proposals for the approvals process⁴, so we do not propose to make any changes to these provisions. We also do not propose to make any changes to the conditions for use of linked outdoor areas for ceremonies⁵ as the majority of respondents were happy with these.

We acknowledge that there was a small minority of respondents who asked that there be approvals for the specific outdoor area where weddings would take place, however we consider these to be heavily outweighed by the number of respondents who supported the continuation of automatic deeming of applications to include “linked outdoor areas”. We have also carefully considered the small number of comments asking for additional checks by local authorities to ensure conditions had been met, however no changes to these are proposed.

We have carefully considered the existing condition restricting the sale or consumption of food or alcoholic drinks prior to the proceedings. As the majority of respondents asked to maintain the condition, this condition will also be retained. This is because we consider the condition will help ensure ceremonies remain seemly and dignified, will reflect the solemnity of the occasion and will help ensure that couples are marrying with their full mental capacity (or that any issues with capacity are more easily recognised by the registrar). However, we are conscious that more clarity is required as to whether this condition applies to the entire outdoor area or just the immediate area next to where the ceremony is taking place. We will therefore clarify the effect of the restriction in accompanying guidance documents to make clear that it is only intended to apply to the immediate area next to where the ceremony will take place, and not to the linked outdoor area of an approved premise as a whole.

As requested by multiple respondents, we will also clarify the guidance in relation to the types of permissible structures for outdoor ceremonies, which we consider will help remove any uncertainty about where a ceremony may take place in the case of inclement weather, for example.

To address respondents’ concerns around the use of marquees and in which structures an ‘outdoors’ ceremony could be held, we will amend the definition of “linked outdoor areas” so that it will mean those areas within the boundary of the land which are not “built

⁴ e.g. the automatic deeming of currently approved premises to include “linked outdoor areas”, and that new approvals and renewals would automatically include linked outdoor areas

⁵ Requirement to secure confirmation that the location is seemly and dignified; Requirement that the location be identifiable by description Requirement for a suitable notice to be displayed with certain information; Restrictions relating to the consumption and sale of food and drink

premises". In other words, the two definitions will become mutually exclusive. This means that semi-permanent or other structures within the linked outdoor areas that are partially or fully open at the sides, such as marquees, will be able to be used for outdoor ceremonies. This change in definition will also be clarified in guidance for venues and registrars.

Minor and technical amendments which do not represent a change in policy will also be made to the content of the SI.

Religious Outdoor Marriages LRO

Respondents were overwhelmingly in favour of the proposal to extend the provision of outdoor ceremonies to religious marriages, on a permissive basis. The Government will therefore take these proposals forward when legislative time is available.

There was near unanimous support for the Government's proposals regarding the approvals process⁶ so it remains the Government's intention to bring this forward.

Religious groups who responded to the consultation supported the proposal, however some noted that they would be keen to have a more detailed understanding of how the proposal would work in practice, and to receive reassurance that the provisions will remain permissive in nature.

We will therefore conduct additional stakeholder engagement with religious bodies and places of worship, as well as other stakeholders affected by this proposal and will continue to work closely with them as the work progresses.

Law Commission recommendations for reform

In July 2019, the Government asked the Law Commission to provide recommendations for a reformed law of marriage that allowed greater choice within a simple, fair, and consistent legal structure. It is a law that has been added to over several centuries without any systematic reform.

⁶ to deem churches and chapels of the Church of England and the Church in Wales to include automatically their outdoor grounds so that marriages can be solemnised in these grounds if the respective Church permits, to deem current registrations of places of worship for other faiths (other than Jewish and Quaker faiths) to include automatically their outdoor grounds so that marriages can be solemnised in these grounds if the respective religious body permits, and that any new applications for registration of places of worship would extend to the outdoor grounds automatically, but that householders should certify that they desire that the registration extend to the outdoor grounds, and that consents of relevant governing authorities should also extend to the outdoor grounds.

We have carefully considered the large volume of responses by humanists in favour of providing for legally recognised Humanist marriage immediately, in addition to the proposals discussed in this response. However, we remain committed to carefully considering the case for more comprehensive and fundamental reform to marriage law once the Law Commission has completed its review of the law in this area and will carefully consider the Law Commission's recommendations when the final report is published. The Law Commission's report, expected in July 2022, will contain recommendations for reform. Options being explored and which were provisionally included in its September 2020 consultation, include offering couples greater flexibility to form their own ceremonies, allowing the ceremony to take place in a much broader range of locations and to provide a framework that could allow non-religious belief organisations (such as Humanists) and/or independent celebrants to conduct legally binding weddings.

The Government recognises the sustained and long-term efforts made by Humanists UK, and the concerns of couples who share humanist beliefs, to secure provision for legally recognised Humanist marriage ceremonies, whether indoors or outdoors. The Government remains committed to considering the case for more comprehensive reform to marriage law, and will decide on whether and how to make provision for legally recognised humanist marriage once the Law Commission has completed its fundamental review and the Government has carefully considered all of its recommendations.

Consultation principles

The principles that Government departments and other public bodies should adopt for engaging stakeholders when developing policy and legislation are set out in the Cabinet Office Consultation Principles 2018:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691383/Consultation_Principles__1__.pdf

Annex A – List of respondents

Organisations

Alkincoats Ltd

Alpheton Hall Barns

Aoic

Association of Independent Celebrants

Bartholomew Barn Wedding Venue

Batemans Barn Wedding Venue

Bath and North East Somerset Registration Service

Bc Bespoke Ceremonies

Birmingham City Council

Bournemouth, Christchurch And Poole Council

Bradford Mdc

Bridebook

Bristol City Council

Buckinghamshire Registration Service

Cadhay

Cardiff University

Catholic Bishops of England And Wales

Celtic Minor Ltd

Central Bedfordshire Council

Church in Wales

Church of England

City of London Corporation

Civil Ceremonies Ltd

Claire Lawrence Celebrant

Clifford Barton Weddings

Colehayes Park

Confidential

County Council

Derbyshire County Council

Devon Registration Service

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Dorset Council

East Riding of Yorkshire Council

East Sussex County Council

Elite Events Hire

Escot Estate

Essex County Council

Essex Registration Service

Ever After

Fellowship of Professional Celebrants

Flintshire Registration Service / Flintshire County Council

FOIC

Forest Edge Tipis

General Assembly of Unitarian & Free Christian Churches

Gidleigh Park

Glebe House Cottages Ltd

Guides for Brides Ltd

Hale Park

Haringey Register Office

Historic Houses

Historic Royal Palaces

Hotel

Humanists UK

Huntsmill Farm

Independent Celebrant

Jess May's Special Days

Kennaway House

Kingsbridge Town Council

Krishna's Online Research Institute

Lancashire County Council but On Behalf of The National Panel for Registration and
North West Regional Registration Managers Network

Lanwades Hall Llp

Leicestershire Registration Service

Leweston School/Enterprise

Local Authority

Local Government

Lympne Castle

Mary Harboe Celebrants

Michelle Taylor Celebrant

Millbrook Estate

Milton Keynes Council

National Secular Society

NHS

Northumberland County Council

Nottingham City Council

Owlpen Manor Estate

Oxfordshire Registration Service

Parish of High Halstow & Allhallows With St Mary Hoo

Parish of South Gillingham (Diocese of Rochester, Church of England)

Port Waterhouse

Powellslaw

Pynes House

Quakers In Britain

Serb - South East Registration Board

Sharpham Trust

Sheepdrove Organic Farm - Wedding Venue

Sheffield Register Office

Southernhay Urc Church

Strategic Art Ltd

Telford & Wrekin Council

The Archbishops' Council of The Church of England

The Baptist Union Of Great Britain

The Barn at Cott Farm

The Coombe Farm Trust - (Middle Coombe Farm - Wedding Venue)

The Country Celebrant

The International Family Law Group Llp

The Lamb Inn at Sandford

The Plough Inn

The Wedding Barn at Gwaenynog Farmhouse

The Wedding Owl

The White Rose Celebrant

Vale of Glamorgan Council

Valleyside Barn & Escapes

Vows That Wow

Wakefield Council

Warwickshire County Council

Warwickshire Registration Service

Wedding Business

Wedding Celebrancy Commission

Wedding Venue

West Sussex County Council

Wick Farm Bath

Wigan Council

Wimborne Minster Town Council

Winckworth Sherwood Llp

Individuals⁷

Alissa A Kindred

Amber Beth Dalton

Anastasia Symecko

Anna Jobling

Carina Berry

Clare Taylor

David Pollock

Desi Reed

Genevra Pope

Glenn Mayes

Hannah Wightman

Jessica K Dumbreck

Julie Toogood

Kelly Hawes

Laura Chapman

Lily Harrison

Michelle Jones

Miranda Ash

Ms Nikki J Greenway

Nick Moore

Rachael Arundell

Rachel Morgan

⁷ Where organisation not provided or not representing the views of their organisation

Rebecca

Roger Salmon

Sarah Lurcock

Shelley Bell Celebrant

Stephanie Wiggans

Suzie

The Rev Dr Richard Cleaves

Will H

By protected characteristic⁸

Characteristic	Number of respondents
Age	17
Marriage and Civil Partnership	26
Religion or Belief	23
Disability	11
Pregnancy and Maternity	4
Sex	11
Gender Reassignment	2
Race	6

⁸ Of the 204 responses received, this table shows the number of respondents which identified as having each of the following nine protected characteristics as set out by the Equality Act (2010). Note that some individuals may identify as having more than one protected characteristic, so may be counted in more than one group for the purposes of this consultation response.

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Sexual Orientation	13
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