



## More support for women in business

On 4 November the Minister for Women announced that the Government would be looking at what more could be done to ensure that women were fully able to use their talents to support both themselves and economic growth. To ensure Government get the best advice we will be setting up a Women's Business Council. The details are still being worked out but we expect the group to look at a range of issues including;

- Supporting more women to become entrepreneurs
- Tackling obstacles to making best use of women's skills (which could include childcare, careers advice, skills, rolling out Voluntary Gender Equality Reporting)
- Road testing existing policies and programmes to ensure relevance for women in business.

As more immediate support for women in business the Government will be funding the recruitment and training of 5,000 new mentors to support women set up and grow their businesses.

Details of the announcement can be found at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/press-releases/women-at-the-heart-of-plans>

We have already had a very positive response to the announcement and further details on how you can get involved in either of these areas will be available shortly. In the meantime if you want to register your interest in either becoming a mentor or supporting the work of the council please email [womensengagement@geo.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:womensengagement@geo.gsi.gov.uk)

## Specific Duties Quick Start Guide

GEO has published a quick start guide to help public bodies understand and implement the specific duties which support the Equality Duty. <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/equality-act-publications/equality-act-guidance/specific-duties>

## Body Confidence Campaign

The government's body confidence campaign continues to progress and the government is working with a range of sectors to tackle negative body image. For more information on the campaign, visit: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/body-confidence>

In partnership with Media Smart, a not-for-profit organisation specialising in media literacy for children, the government launched a teaching pack on body image. This helps children understand how images in the media are altered and the impact these have on self esteem. For more information and a link to download the teachers pack, visit: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/news/media-smart>

Lynne Featherstone spoke at a fitness industry event to encourage gyms and health centres to support the body confidence campaign. The Minister asked the fitness industry to move away from selling the 'perfect body' and promote healthy and achievable bodies based on attainable and realistic goals. To read the full speech, visit: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/speeches/FIA-Lynne-Featherstone>

## Civil Partnerships on Religious Premises

The Government ran a consultation between March and June this year on the practical arrangements necessary to implement section 202 of the Equality Act 2010. Making this change will allow those religious organisations that wish to do so to host civil partnership registrations on their religious premises. This voluntary provision is a positive step forward for both LGB rights and religious freedom.

The Government response to this consultation was published on 2 November along with a copy of the draft regulations. We are grateful to everyone who submitted a response. Over 1600 responses were received and all were individually considered in formulating the final regulations. The regulations have now been laid in both Houses. A copy of the Government response is available at the following link: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/lgbt-equality-publications/civilpartnership-response>

## First football club signs the Sports Charter

On Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October, Wycombe Wanderers became the first professional football club to sign the [Charter for Action](#) to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport. They were shortly followed by Charlton Athletic, Dagenham & Redbridge, Huddersfield City and Bradford City. For more information, please follow this link: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/lgbt/sports-charter/>

The *Charter for Action* was launched by Equalities Minister Lynne Featherstone in March, in partnership with major national sports governing bodies this year. It calls for anyone with an interest or involvement in sport to unite in a common cause to challenge discrimination both on and off the pitch.

These football teams join a growing list of supporters for the campaign including rugby union's Ben Cohen and tennis stars Martina Navratilova and Billie Jean King, the Football Association, the Lawn Tennis Association, the England and Wales Cricket Board, the Rugby Football League and the Rugby Football Union.

To build on this work, we have developed a new [toolkit](#) to help National Governing Bodies and sports clubs raise awareness of the issue and promote the action they are taking to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport.

You too can sign the *Charter for Action* by [emailing us](#) or visiting our [Facebook page](#). But please don't stop there. We need your help spreading the word by inviting friends, colleagues, family members, team mates and local clubs to sign up too.

## Next issue...

We hope to announce the outcome of the Equalities Red Tape Challenge later in 2011 and will send out a newsletter on this.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/>