

Sir Peter Fraser and Prof. Lisa Webley
1st Floor, Tower
52 Queen Anne's Gate
London
SW1H 9AG

MoJ ref: SUB127780

2 October 2025

Dear Sir Peter and Professor Webley,

WEDDINGS LAW REFORM

I am writing to confirm that the Government has today announced that it will be reforming weddings law when parliamentary time allows, with a view to undertaking a public consultation on the detail of reform early next year.

In making this announcement, the Government wishes to acknowledge its immense gratitude to the Law Commission for its 2022 report on weddings law. The report is a very impressive piece of work. Please do pass to Professor Nicholas Hopkins and his team my thanks for this very significant report. I have detailed below the main features of the reform which were recommended by your team's wedding report.

The first feature is that the law will shift from a system based on the regulation of buildings to regulation of the officiant responsible for the ceremony. This will mean that restrictions on where weddings can take place can be removed, subject to strict regulations ensuring that they remain dignified and serious.

The second feature is that there will be universal rules for all weddings. This will remove the wide range of inconsistencies in the current law, create equitable, clear rules and simplify the process for getting married. These reforms will ensure a level playing field for all groups. And, in delivering these reforms, the Government commits to remove the difference in treatment of humanists that was found by the High Court in the case of *Harrison*.

The Government will launch a public consultation early next year on the detail of reform, drawing on the 57 recommendations in your report. The consultation will likely focus on protecting the dignity of wedding ceremonies, consider whether independent celebrants should be allowed to conduct legally binding weddings, and explore the criteria and safeguards for religious and non-religious organisations nominating officiants.

Thank you again for all the considerable work the Law Commission has undertaken on weddings law over the past decade. Your report provides an invaluable foundation for the Government's approach to reform. As we take forward the next phase of this work, we do so guided by the framework which you have recommended. Please accept this letter as the Government's formal full response to your 2022 report.

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Thanks again for your work in this area.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'The Baroness Levitt', with a long horizontal flourish extending from the end.

THE BARONESS LEVITT KC

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