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Working hard on many issues

The Christian Institute is engaged in many issues, as this newsletter shows.

An internal Government review of how sex education is taught is under way and the Government is under pressure to make it a mandatory subject in primary schools.

We are financing a number of legal actions to defend religious liberty. We are also campaigning for the Public Order Act to be amended so that Christians are no longer arrested simply because someone feels "insulted" by their opinions.

We are speaking out against those who are seeking to impose a redefinition of marriage on society so that homosexual couples can 'marry'.

We are continuing our work to protect churches and Christian charities from burdensome and intrusive over-regulation.

We are concerned about Government plans to introduce a Public Sector Equality Duty which would add to politically-correct bureaucracy and further marginalise Christianity. We are urging the Government to reconsider its position.

Government silent on 'mandatory' sex ed

The Government's new Education White Paper for England has failed to rule out forcing schools to teach sex education. A White Paper is a document that sets out Government policy intentions. The Education White Paper comes at a time when there is sustained pressure to compel primary schools to teach sex education.

The White Paper promises an "internal review" of all PSHE (personal, social, health and economic education) teaching in schools, but does not commit the Government to keeping the present law which allows primary schools the

freedom whether or not to teach sex education.¹

In December The Christian Institute launched its campaign against statutory sex education in primary schools. A report published by the Institute exposes numerous explicit resources already being recommended for primary schools by local councils. This news can only increase concern about the sexualisation of childhood.

Influential lobby groups such as the Sex Education Forum and FPA are demanding more and more sex education at ever younger ages in the face of clear evidence

that the current approach is a failure.

There is no mention in the White Paper of public consultation on this issue. Although it promises to work with "teachers, parents, faith groups and campaign groups" on its plans for sex education,

homosexual lobby group Stonewall is the only specific organisation the Government promises to work with.

¹ *The Importance of Teaching, The Schools White Paper 2010*, Department for Education, November 2010, para 4.30



Only one person in 100 is a homosexual, says official survey

Just one adult in 100 is a homosexual, according to recently released Government figures.

The Office for National Statistics' Integrated Household Survey, which asked almost 250,000 people about their sexuality, also revealed just 0.5

per cent are bisexuals.

Statisticians spent three years perfecting the way in which the question was worded to ensure that they got the most accurate result.

Significantly, all of the respondents were able to disclose their sexuality

confidentially.

In 2003 the former Labour Government endorsed figures from a homosexual campaign group which claimed that between five and seven per cent of the population were homosexuals.



Fotolia/SVLuma

The ONS survey asked almost 250,000 people about their sexuality.

The Times insists all media should promote homosexual agenda

All newspapers should promote the homosexual agenda, according to a recent editorial in The Times.

The newspaper also said it longs for the day when the homosexual agenda becomes fully embedded in society.

The paper was boasting about winning the 'Publication of the Year' award from the homosexual campaign group, Stonewall.

Transsexualism is a 'delusion' says former sex-swap man

A man who had sex-swap surgery says the NHS should stop all such operations. Charles Kane spent £100,000 on operations to look like a woman and then changed back. He said he needed counselling not surgery and warned that those who believe they are trapped in the wrong body are "completely deluded".

Attempt to push gay marriage in the courts

Homosexual activists have launched a campaign to try and use the nation's courts to fundamentally redefine marriage and impose the new definition on society.

The controversial campaign – led by Peter Tatchell (below) – has seen four same-sex couples apply for civil marriage licences, and four heterosexual couples apply for civil partnerships, fully aware that their respective applications would be rejected.

When the couples have all been turned down they intend to take their case to court claiming a breach of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The campaign is unlikely to succeed. But if it did, according to Stonewall, changing the definition of marriage in this way would cost the taxpayer £5 billion to implement.

Earlier this year the European Court of Human Rights ruled that there was no universal right to same-sex marriage contained within the Convention.

The campaign mimics judicial activism in some American states where same-sex marriage has been imposed through the courts.



Flickr/Lewishamdreamer

Review ordered into child sexualisation

The problems caused by the sexualisation and commercialisation of childhood will be examined by an independent review to begin in December, the Government has announced.

The review group, which has been set up by the Department for Education, is scheduled to publish its findings in May next year.

It follows a Conservative Party manifesto commitment to help parents deal with the commercialisation of childhood.

Ahead of the election, Tory leader David Cameron said: "More and more today, sexual-provocative images are invading public space – space shared by children.



David Cameron has spoken out against the "premature sexualisation" of children.

"In the Tube station, at the bus stop, on the billboard – there's the creeping sense that we're sleepwalking to a place where 'porn is the norm'."

He added: "After all, it's our shared responsibility to protect children from aggressive commercialism and premature sexualisation.

"This is not about

being prudish or old-fashioned. It's about remembering the simple pleasures of our own childhood – and making sure our children can enjoy them too."

The previous Labour Government held an independent review of the sexualisation of young people, headed by psychologist Dr Linda

Papadopoulos. It reported in February.

Dr Papadopoulos said sexualisation must be accepted as harmful and girls should be encouraged to see that their true value does not lie in their sexual appeal.

Isle of Wight hands out the pill to 13-year-olds

Girls as young as 13 on the Isle of Wight are set to be given a month's supply of contraceptive pills without their parents' knowledge under a controversial new scheme. The programme will target girls who are seeking the morning-after pill. But critics have warned that it will sideline parents.



Dreamstime/5-dmit

Wales escapes compulsory sex ed for primary schools

Primary schools in Wales will not be forced to teach sex and relationship education (SRE), the Welsh Assembly Government has confirmed.

Last year the Assembly launched a consultation on SRE for primary schools, and there was concern that it was intending to make the subject compulsory for children as young as five.

The Christian Institute informed supporters in Wales and encouraged them to respond to the consultation, opposing SRE as a curriculum subject for primary schools.

Ministers recently released a new action plan reaffirming that SRE will not be compulsory for primary schools.

However, ministers do propose to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies by encouraging youngsters to talk openly about sex and relationships. The Assembly will also increase the money for its controversial sexual health programme.

But critics have warned that value-free sex education is part of the problem, not part of the solution.

Sex shop next to school store faces legal challenge



A licence has been granted for a sex shop in Cornwall to open right next door to a school uniform shop frequented by children as young as three. The firm 'Mrs Palm Ltd' was controversially given the go-ahead to open a sex shop in Truro in August despite strong objections from local residents.

The licence was granted by Cornwall Council. Now a Truro City Councillor and The Christian Institute have joined forces to challenge the contentious decision in court. Cornwall Council has decided not to fight the case but the sex shop owner is contesting the legal action.

Simon Calvert, Deputy Director (Public Affairs) of The Christian Institute, said: "If it is OK to license shops to sell hard core porn next to premises routinely used by children and families, then nowhere is safe."

Secularists sue town council for praying

Bideford Town Council is being taken to court by the well-financed National Secular Society (NSS) because it won't discontinue the saying of Christian prayers at the start of its council meetings.

The traditional practice is repeated in town halls up and down the land – and of course in Parliament too. It is part of our

Christian heritage, and it recognises that we are still constitutionally a Christian nation.

The majority of council members in Bideford want to retain the practice. However, the council is not confident that it has the funds to pay for a prolonged legal battle.

So The Christian Institute has stepped in and offered to pay

their legal costs if the council should lose. If the council wins, the court is likely to order that the NSS pays most of the council's legal costs.

A nationally-funded secular campaign group should not be picking on a small town council in a bid to push Christianity out of public life.

Christian B&B owners in court over double room policy



Christian B&B owners Peter and Hazelmary Bull

A judge will decide over the Christmas period whether the Christian owners of a Cornish guesthouse are breaking the law by restricting their double rooms to married couples.

Peter and Hazelmary Bull sat through a two-day trial because homosexuals Steven Preddy and Martyn Hall brought a claim of discrimination.

Civil partners Mr Preddy and Mr Hall were not able to occupy a double room at the guesthouse and are seeking up to £5,000 for injury to feelings.

But the owners, Mr and Mrs Bull, deny discrimination as the policy is applied equally to all unmarried couples – whether homosexual or heterosexual.

At the end of the two-day hearing the judge decided to reserve judgment because the case raises important and complex matters of law.

The Bulls' legal defence is financed by The Christian Institute. Director Colin Hart has urged Christians to pray for a positive result.

Two cases of police wrongly arresting street preachers

The Christian Institute has successfully backed two important legal victories involving street preachers wrongly arrested by the police.

Birmingham County Court ordered West Midlands Police to pay over £4,000 to Mr Anthony Rollins for wrongful arrest, unlawful imprisonment, and interference with his human rights.

The court also ruled that the police committed assault and battery when they handcuffed Mr Rollins unnecessarily. Mr Rollins had been reading out the King James Bible.

In a separate case, police in Cumbria have admitted they were wrong to arrest, detain and charge a street preacher from Workington.

Dale Mcalpine had not mentioned the subject of homosexuality when preaching. But in conversation with a Police Community Support Officer he said the Bible says homosexual conduct is a sin. His subsequent arrest was caught on a hidden video camera.

In both cases police were misusing Section 5 of the Public Order Act to arrest and charge the street preachers.

Northern Ireland charity guidance delayed

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) has been forced to delay the release of its controversial new Public Benefit Guidance because of fears over its legality.

The guidance aims to explain how the CCNI would decide

if an organisation is deemed as charitable.

The Christian Institute, together with numerous church leaders in the Province, had warned that the guidance could endanger the charitable status of churches, and said the Commission was

overstepping its remit.

After receiving legal advice the Commission postponed its guidance. This means the registration process has also been put on hold for the time being.

Defend free speech: repeal the word 'insulting' from Section 5 of the Public Order Act

The Christian Institute has launched a campaign to amend the Public Order Act so that people cannot be arrested just because someone else feels "insulted" by their opinions.

In a number of troubling incidents, some involving Christians, the police have unjustly arrested people for lawfully expressing their beliefs in a public place.

Under Section 5 it is a criminal offence to use "insulting" words that are likely to "distress" another person.

The law was introduced

during the 80s to help police deal with genuine public disorder like football

hooliganism and unruly industrial disputes.

But in recent years it has been wrongly used to silence people who may express unpopular opinions. This seriously undermines free speech and civil liberty.

We are therefore pressing the Government to use its upcoming Freedom Bill to repeal the word "insulting" from Section 5 of the Public Order Act.

This would allow the police to tackle genuine public disorder while not criminalising lawful debate or dissent.

Amending the law in this way has the support of civil rights groups, Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights, and MPs and Peers across the political spectrum.

The Home Office says the Freedom Bill will be published by February 2011.



Institute responds to coalition Government's equality consultation

The Christian Institute has urged the Government to follow through with its promise to move towards an 'equality of opportunity' approach and away from an 'equality of outcomes' approach.

There is a significant difference between the two. One encourages freedom and fairness; the other encourages restriction and bureaucracy.

'Equality of opportunity' is a public policy approach that attempts to ensure fairness and remove unjust barriers that hinder people trying to better themselves.

But 'equality of outcomes' is a top-down approach that uses the power of the state to insist that everyone's life has the same result.

The Government has been consulting on its contentious Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This duty, which is part of the Equality Act, requires all public bodies to advance 'equality'.

As it stands the 'equality duty' will require public bodies to publish equality outcome objectives "as part of their normal business planning process".

But the Institute has warned that such proposals will simply act as a distraction for overstretched organisations, and go far beyond



Theresa May, Home Secretary and equalities minister

what is actually required by the Equality Act. It may also harm the religious liberty of Christian groups who interact with the public sector.

Since the consultation closed Theresa May, the Home Secretary and equalities minister, has distanced herself from the equality of outcomes approach. Instead she has said that the Government should be encouraging equality of opportunity.

Gambling laws to be relaxed

The Government is proposing to further weaken gambling laws to prop up failing arcades. It has published plans to relax controls on slot machines which are a significant source of income for the industry. Critics say gambling disproportionately affects the poor and leads to serious addiction.

Court case may affect status of church volunteers

The Institute has intervened in a court case that could affect the status of church volunteers. The High Court is being asked to rule on whether volunteerism should be treated more like employment. If it were, church volunteers could be caught by the bureaucracy and political correctness of secular employment laws.

Broken families cost £100 billion

Family breakdown may be costing the nation up to £100 billion a year, a Government minister has said. The stark warning came from Iain Duncan Smith, the Work and Pensions Secretary, who criticised policies that undermine the role of the family. He said such policies have led to more crime, more poverty and poorer prospects for children.