



1963 – 2024

## COLIN HART

DIRECTOR,  
THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE



# A servant-hearted man who devoted his life to Christ

On 13 March our founder and Director Colin Hart passed into glory.

He devoted his life to encouraging Christians to grasp that following Jesus transforms all aspects of our lives. He wanted to equip believers to live out their faith publicly as well as privately.

It was this sense of calling that led to the founding of The Christian Institute, and over the last 35 years helped shape the UK's legal, political and cultural landscape.

The Supreme Court victories in the famous Ashers 'gay cake' case and over the Scottish Government's infamous 'Named Person' scheme have become

embedded in the public consciousness as well as the legal textbooks. But they are only two of many milestones.

These days it is taken for granted that a church can employ youth workers and other staff who actually adhere to the Christian faith. But this is only the case because of work Colin led from 2000-2003 to oppose the overreach of equality laws.

In 2006 he helped engineer a rare Blair Government defeat over plans for a religious hatred law which could have been used to clamp down on gospel preaching. The final win, by just one vote, was an important reminder of the sovereignty of God.

Colin's unflinching trust in that sovereignty was his source of comfort for those battles which were lost. He would say that, win or lose, it was important to stand up for the truth.

Seeing the future impact of legislation was one of his standout abilities. In 2004 he was one of the few to publicly oppose the Gender Recognition Act, a law that has led to the idea that men have a 'right' to use women's changing rooms. In the days up to his death, he was challenging Michael Gove's new definition of 'extremism'. In short, he was always mindful of the need for vigilance in protecting our hard-won Christian freedoms.

But Colin always placed greatest value on his role instructing other Christians to 'think Christianly'.

This priority was set out in the Institute's first 'mission statement':

*"The Christian Institute exists to affirm the universal Lordship of Christ, to challenge humanism, pluralism, and other ideologies, to proclaim biblical truth as relevant to every area of life, and to equip Christians for action."*

It is a priority to which, under God, the Institute remains committed today.

# "I am the resurrection and the life"



Ciarán  
Kelly,  
Acting  
Director

This is not the introduction I expected to be writing for this newsletter. The sudden loss of Colin is still raw and painful.

The issues we are grappling with at The Christian Institute – a possible new 'conversion therapy' law, assisted suicide, abortion, transgender ideology and more – have not disappeared. The work of The Christian Institute will certainly continue unabated. But it is right and proper to take a moment to

reflect on the man who founded the Institute and served it so faithfully for 35 years.

Colin was not one to seek the limelight, but he never allowed this natural modesty to prevent him speaking out on issues of national significance. While others remained silent, Colin tackled these issues boldly and faithfully under the conviction that the Bible sets out God's good design not merely for the Church, but for all of society.

But his tireless work for the Institute was not for its own sake; his constant motivation was his love for the Lord Jesus Christ and gratitude for what He had done at Calvary.

He exemplified the declaration of the Psalmist: "Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long" (Psalm 119:97), championing the truth that God's moral law remains powerful, relevant and life-giving in our own day.

The loss to the Church and the nation, as well as the Institute, is enormous.

*'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies'* JOHN 11:25



TRIBUTES  
TO COLIN:

[the.ci/Tributes](https://the.ci/Tributes)

## Parliament resists attempts to ban 'conversion therapy'

MPs and Peers have resisted attempts to bring in a new law on so-called conversion therapy.

In February, Baroness Burt's Private Member's Bill for a new law criminalising 'conversion therapy' was strongly opposed in the House of Lords. At Second Reading almost twice as many Peers spoke against her Bill as for it. As is convention, it proceeded to Committee.

On 1 March, Labour MP Lloyd Russell-Moyle introduced a similar Bill in the House of Commons which



Baroness Burt and Lloyd Russell-Moyle MP

also risked criminalising churches and parents for upholding biblical sexual ethics. His proposals were so strongly opposed, the Bill ran out of time and cannot become law.

The most pressing threat now is an amendment by Alicia

Kearns MP to the Government's Criminal Justice Bill, expected to be considered in April. Kearns believes the UK should imitate the conversion therapy law in Victoria, Australia, where praying about repentance with an

LGBT friend is likely to be illegal.

The Institute has been at the forefront of opposition to a new law criminalising 'conversion practices' for years. It remains a major threat to gospel freedom. We have commissioned a series of legal opinions from top human rights KCs Jason Coppel and Aidan O'Neill. These clearly highlight the dangers to the ordinary work of churches and the freedom of parents to shield their children from dangerous sex-swamp drugs.

# 'Broad extremism definition must not silence Christians'

The UK Government wants to block 'extremist' groups from accessing public funding and engaging with the Government under a new definition of extremism.

The controversial new wording purports to tackle promoting an 'intolerant' ideology that aims to "negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others".

The Government claims the definition sets a "high bar that only captures the most concerning of activities" and will not "affect free speech, which will always be protected".

But the Institute's Ciarán Kelly warned: "Rather than creating a new definition, the authorities should make better use of the vast arsenal of laws



that already exist to deal with terrorism and extremism.

"In the past, new measures have ended up endangering rather than protecting religious freedom.

"Ordinary people, Christian or otherwise, should not be put at risk of being caught by vague terminology which threatens our historic liberties."

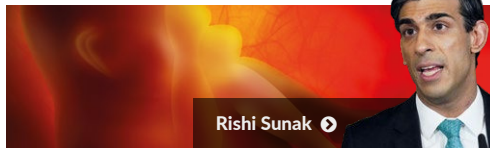


# Institute urges Prime Minister to block abortion decriminalisation

The Institute has urged the Prime Minister not to allow his Criminal Justice Bill to be hijacked by the abortion lobby.

Labour MP Dame Diana Johnson is seeking to amend the Bill to give women in England and Wales the right to kill their babies up to birth without criminal prosecution.

Initially, the existing law will still apply to medical practitioners.



The Institute's late Director Colin Hart warned: "This proposal crosses a new moral Rubicon and will inevitably lead to full decriminalisation of abortion".

It follows a sharp rise in police investigations into illegal abortions as a

result of the lobby group driven introduction of the controversial DIY home abortion scheme in 2022.

Separate pro-life amendments to reduce the current abortion limits have also been tabled by MPs Caroline Ansell and Sir

Liam Fox. If selected, the amendments are expected to be considered in April.

In January, new guidance from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists threatened medics with sanctions for reporting illegal abortions to the police. The guidance had been created by a group chaired by Dr Jonathan Lord, Medical Director of abortion giant MSI Reproductive Choices UK.

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## Public anger ends 'amoral' abortion plan for NI schools

All post-primary children in Northern Ireland are set to learn about contraception and abortion, following changes to the Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) curriculum imposed by Westminster.

Initially, the Department of Education proposed that resources should not "advocate, or oppose, a particular view". However, when it consulted on the matter, almost three-quarters of respondents opposed the teaching of



abortion in schools without considering ethical concerns.

The DoE has now published amended guidance, which makes clear that the change to the curriculum "does not prevent teachers and pupils from discussing and commenting on moral, ethical or spiritual issues".

Amnesty International has demanded even easier access to abortions in the Province, championing abortion as an "essential human right". The Institute's Acting Director Ciarán Kelly described the call as evidence of its "utter disregard for the lives of the unborn".

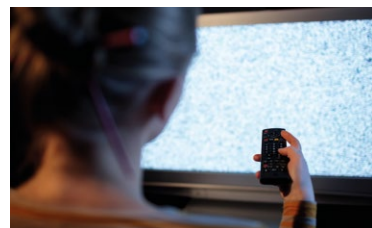
## NHS England ends 'routine' puberty blockers for kids

Puberty-blocking drugs will no longer be 'routinely commissioned' for gender-confused children because of insufficient evidence to support their safety or effectiveness, NHS England has confirmed.

However, 16-year-olds will still be allowed to receive cross-sex hormones without taking puberty blockers first.

Guidance from the National Referral Support Service 'strongly discourages' children and their families from sourcing such drugs from "on-line providers that are not regulated by UK regulatory bodies".

The guidance also places limitations on children being referred to gender clinics without parental consent. It advises that teachers and social workers must discuss any referral with the child's family "and seek their agreement".



# MPs issue stark warning not to legalise assisted suicide

The dangers of legalising assisted suicide have been set out by MPs in a recent stark report.

In February, the House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee recommended that the Government ensures “universal coverage” of palliative care and end-of-life services. However, it stopped short of opposing a new assisted suicide law. Palliative care expert Baroness Finlay of Llandaff has repeatedly warned that a state-sanctioned



“suicide service” would be fraught with danger and impossible to regulate.

In 2023, a survey of more than 1,000 doctors revealed that 59 per cent would not administer lethal drugs to a patient. One of the most-cited reasons for opposing a change

in the law was the belief that the “focus should be on improving palliative care”.

The UK’s leading anti-assisted suicide group, Care Not Killing, welcomed the detail of the report but called MPs’ refusal to firmly reject the removal of end-of-life protections

“disappointing”.

It comes amid a new high-profile campaign to remove end-of-life protections for vulnerable people, led by TV personality Dame Esther Rantzen.

Public figures including MP Danny Kruger, Paralympic legend Tanni Grey-Thompson and former Home Office Minister Ann Widdecombe have all publicly opposed Rantzen’s campaign. They are calling for the continued protection of the disabled, frail and sick from feeling pressured to die.

# Institute: ‘New trans guidance for schools a significant step forward’

The Christian Institute has been encouraging teachers to follow the Government’s draft guidance on how schools should help gender-questioning children.

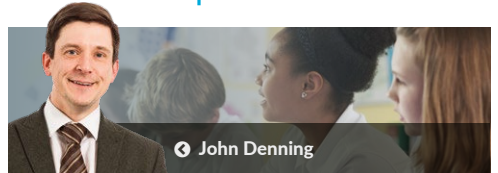
The Department for Education’s guidelines clarify that schools are not required to allow children to socially transition or to use a child’s ‘preferred pronouns’.

Activist groups such as Mermaids have pressured teachers to

ignore the guidance, but it has been largely welcomed as a key step towards ending the trans-affirming agenda pushed on schools in recent years.

The Institute’s Head of Education John Denning called the new guidance “a significant step in the right direction”.

“It finally dispels the dangerous ideas that schools should hide a child’s gender confusion from their parents or allow girls’ changing rooms to be



accessible to boys.

“Teachers and pupils alike will also welcome the protections against compelled speech. No one should be forced to use pronouns they know to be false or mislead children in their class.

“But the true effectiveness of the

guidance will only be seen in how robustly it is implemented. Ofsted, which has championed transgender ideology, now needs to ensure activist teachers no longer get away with encouraging gender confusion.”

A public consultation on the guidance closed on 12 March.

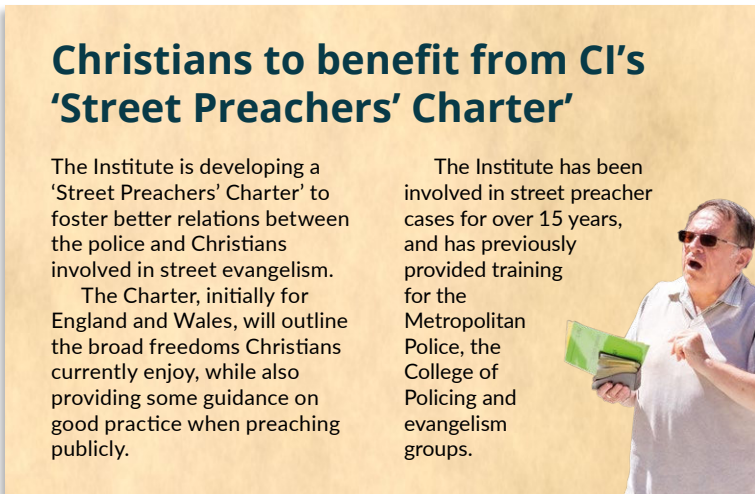
# Glasgow street preacher wins £15,000 after wrongful arrest

A street preacher has won substantial damages from Police Scotland after he was wrongfully arrested over a 'hate crime' accusation.

Angus Cameron had been preaching in Glasgow city centre when a police officer told him there had been complaints of 'homophobic language'.

Bystanders refuted the allegation, but the former pastor was arrested and handcuffed for 'breach of the peace with homophobic aggravation' and put in the back of a police van for over an hour.

He was later told he would not be



## Christians to benefit from CI's 'Street Preachers' Charter'

The Institute is developing a 'Street Preachers' Charter' to foster better relations between the police and Christians involved in street evangelism.

The Charter, initially for England and Wales, will outline the broad freedoms Christians currently enjoy, while also providing some guidance on good practice when preaching publicly.

The Institute has been involved in street preacher cases for over 15 years, and has previously provided training for the Metropolitan Police, the College of Policing and evangelism groups.

prosecuted, but a 'non-crime hate incident report' was still logged.

Following legal action supported

by The Christian Institute, the police removed all reference to the incident from its records.

It also agreed to pay Mr Cameron £5,500 in damages for unlawful detention, and £9,400 in legal costs. He donated all of his compensation to the Institute.

The Institute's Simon Calvert said: "Police Scotland is reviewing its policy and


looking at the College of Policing's guidance on non-crime hate incidents.

"From our experience in this and many other similar cases, we believe we can contribute constructively to this review. We can act as a bridge between the police and street preachers in this vexed area."

## How to give to the work of the CI

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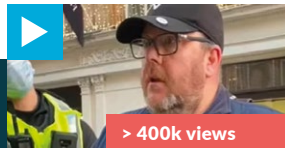
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Registered office: The Christian Institute, Wilberforce House, 4 Park Road, Gosforth Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 8DG  
Tel: 0191 281 5664 | Email: [info@christian.org.uk](mailto:info@christian.org.uk) | Web: [christian.org.uk](https://christian.org.uk) | Published in April 2024  
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