

Union Civile Consultation Frequently Asked Questions

Why now?

The States made a decision in 2006 for the Policy Council to investigate civil partnerships. The world has moved on since then so as part of the Policy Council's Social Policy Group's Equality and Rights Programme, prioritised this political term, different options have been considered.

What has the process has been so far?

The Social Policy Group has asked a number of people to form a Working Group chaired by the Chief Minister and including Deputy Bebb and Deputy Green. It also includes HM Greffier, a representative from the Law Officers, and staff representatives from Commerce and Employment and the Policy Council. This Working Group has helped advise the Policy Council. Political representatives of the Group have also met with representatives of Liberate and religious leaders.

What happens after the consultation?

The views expressed from the consultation will be analysed and will be reported in the Policy Letter to be considered by the States on any proposed changes. The Policy Council's response will be provided in the same report. This is a consultation not a referendum so all views will be considered in the response not just the majority view. The views expressed in the consultation will help inform the States of the public views when they vote for any changes and when they consider proposals for legislation.

Who has been involved working with the States?

As well as those mentioned in 2 above on the Working Group, Liberate and religious leaders the Policy Council has also set up a pilot group to test the consultation and this group or similar groups will hopefully be able to help in testing future surveys from the Policy Council States of Guernsey.

Does this cover the whole Bailiwick?

Any proposed legislation changes will only be for Guernsey, Herm, Jethou and Lihou. They will not cover Alderney, Sark or Brechou. Anyone from the Bailiwick or worldwide can complete the consultation and there is a question in it to identify where people live so that the results can be analysed in different ways.

Is it worth filling in the consultation if the Policy Council already has a preferred option?

The Policy Council wanted to be clear on its preferred option so that it could explain its reasons for suggesting Union Civile and better explain the reasons for change. We are still

very interested in everyone's view, regardless of the extent to which you agree or disagree with any of the options or principles. The results of the consultation will be part of the Policy Letter considered by the States Assembly who will make the final decision on the changes to be made. Your view is therefore very valuable to the Policy Council and the States of Guernsey.

Will the proposals affect me if I am heterosexual?

Yes. The preferred option of Union Civile would be a single system to recognise the relationship of a committed couple regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Opposite-sex couples and same-sex couples will be recognised by the state under Union Civile in exactly the same way.

If the States decide to go for a different option, other than Union Civile, the changes may or may not affect you.

Will the proposals affect me if I am already married?

No. There will be some transitional arrangements put in place for people wanting to get married around the time any legislative changes are put into place.