

# Wedding invitation company cites religious beliefs for refusing services to gay couple

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The National Secular Society has said that legal action under equality legislation should be taken against a wedding stationer for refusing to serve a gay couple on religious grounds.

Jill Wilson, who runs Just For You Invitations, based in Lancashire, refused because of her religious beliefs to offer her services to Gary O'Reilly and his fiancé.

In an email to the couple Ms Wilson wrote: "So sorry to let you both down but I am a Jehovah's Witness and therefore can't make your invitations."

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is unlawful to discriminate against people on the grounds of sexual orientation when providing goods, facilities and services.

Terry Sanderson, president of the National Secular Society, said the business should not be permitted to flout the law, as it appears to have done.

"Being denied goods and services like this is humiliating and renders gay people second class citizens.

"This is tantamount to a business advertising that they are 'open to everyone except homosexuals', similar to the "no dogs, Irish or blacks" so prevalent fifty years ago - but now consigned to history, thanks to our equality laws.

"Everyone has a right to exercise their conscientious objection in their private life, but not in the provision of services or employment where discrimination has been outlawed by Parliament."

A spokesperson from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) told [PinkNews](#): "If anyone thinks that they have been discriminated against unlawfully because of sexual orientation in respect of provision of services they can take steps to enforce their rights.

"A first step would be to make contact with someone who can give them advice in an individual case, such as the Equality and Advisory Support Service, and that's what our advice would be to anyone who thinks they have been discriminated against."

Last year the Supreme Court [rejected an appeal](#) by the owners of a guest house after they had been found guilty of discrimination against a gay couple who wanted to stay in a double room.

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