

Ep 58: Reforming marriage law

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What's wrong with marriage law in England and Wales, and how can it be made fit for purpose in the twenty-first century?

In January, the Law Commission completed a consultation on the [reform of weddings law](#). They are due to publish the results at the end of the year. In this episode, [Emma Park](#) is joined by three guests, who together discuss some of the main problems with the laws surrounding marriages and their consequences in England and Wales, and the ways in which they need to be reformed. These problems include the law's current focus on buildings and the assumption that a wedding ceremony (registry office aside) should involve some sort of religion or belief. Another important topic is the extent to which unregistered religious marriages in minority communities are exploited to give one party an unfair advantage.

[Russell Sandberg](#), Professor of Law at Cardiff University, has recently published a book entitled [Religion and Marriage Law: The Need for Reform](#). See his [blog post on marriage law](#).

[Pragna Patel](#) is the founder of Southall Black Sisters, a non-for-profit, secular and inclusive organisation that supports the rights of Asian and African-Caribbean women in Britain. See her blog post on '[Shariafication by stealth](#)'.

[Philip Spicksley](#) is an independent celebrant and Chair of the Wedding Celebrancy Commission, as well as President of the Association of Independent Celebrants.

The NSS campaigns for legally binding [weddings to be equally open to all](#), regardless of religion or sexual orientation.

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