

## Scotland's 'Gender Reform Bill' blocked by UK Government



Emily Goring

Recently, the Scottish government introduced the 'Gender Recognition Reform Bill'. The bill would completely overhaul the Gender Recognition Act of 2004, in which a transgender person could apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate (or "GRC") enabling them to be legally recognised in their new gender and issued with a new birth certificate.

The bill would revamp the system for obtaining a GRC, for example changing the minimum age of applicants to 16 rather than 18 and applicants only having to live in their acquired gender for three months before applying instead of the current two year period. This reform would greatly improve the application process for transgender people, making it less lengthy and intrusive.

The bill was passed in December of 2022 but blocked from becoming law by the UK government in January. But why was that? Many in favour of the Bill, such as LGBTQ charities and transgender people themselves, praised it for being a step forward in recognition of

### What was the bill and why was it blocked?

transgender human rights and making it easier for transgender people to legally transition and live as their chosen gender identity

However, the bill came under criticism for numerous reasons, most notably that the reform could endanger women - an argument typically used in opposition to transgender rights, due to the concern that violent males could fake identifying as transgender women in order to get closer to other women and harm them.

What happens now? Should the UK government continue to block bills of this kind from becoming laws in order to "be on the safe side" and protect women? Or is it unfair to block laws that could help protect transgender rights?



Parklands pupils and staff raise over £500 for the Syria/Turkey Earthquake appeal.

# Reports

## International Women's Day 2023

Evie McDonnell

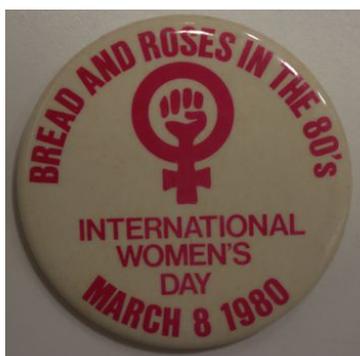
Every Year, on March 8th since 1975, International Women's Day has taken place in many countries across the world being celebrated in over 100 countries since 2014 and being an official holiday in 25 places!

But what is it? Where did it come from? Well, at the minute it is used as a day to celebrate the achievements and social, economic, political and cultural accomplishments of women. It is also a global holiday which brings awareness and attention to problems like gender inequality, reproductive rights and violence/abuse to women.

On top of this, it's a way to honour women's history and remember the struggles that they went through. This is what encourages people to help resolve the problems and to focus on doing their part.

International Women's Day was technically first celebrated in 1911 after a meeting was held by the (new group) International Conference of Working Women when member Clara Zetkin requested a day once a year in every country to press their demands. Following the decision agreed in Copenhagen, International Women's Day was honoured for the first time on the 19th of March in Austria, Germany, Denmark and Switzerland.

Over the next few years multiple developments were made but the next major change was in 1975. This was the year that the UN chose to celebrate it for the first time! Since then, there have been a few ups and downs but things are definitely so much better than what they could have been.



## Puzzler's Corner

Alfie Woods

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## Death Penalty?

Aaron Denham

The death penalty is a punishment used in several countries for several reasons including homicide, a breach of human rights and in some countries in the Middle East, for being a part of the LGBTQ+ community.

There are several reasons why it should and shouldn't be around in this modern day and age. Some reasons for the death penalty being around are people who commit homicides because they robbed someone else's rights so some might say why should they have their right to life removed. Another reason is because it would teach people the consequences for breaching another's human rights.

Despite this there are reasons against the death penalty. One of these reasons is that it goes against the most basic right to humans (the right of life). Another reason is that what if people were framed for something like murder but are actually innocent that would be taking their basic rights to life.

In my opinion, the death penalty should be banned under most cases but should be used on people who commit the worst and most heinous of crimes. I also think that this should not be used for people who are part of the LGBTQ+ community as people should not have to hide the truth within themselves due to fear of being executed.

Which leaves one question of what is your opinion on this matter?

### Countries where there are laws against homosexuality



## School Hygiene

Lilly Hodgkinson & Faye McMullan

As a school we aim for and achieve good hygiene. However, there are a few mistakes here and there, but not really through the fault of school staff. For instance the cleanliness of the school bathrooms comes up a lot but if you look at it, in fact the cleaners are almost always in there cleaning them, which begs the question who is making them unclean and untidy again?

Although they have improved since cameras have been installed, they still don't remain as clean as many people would like them to be. Another one is the classrooms of which we have to spend almost an hour of the day in. When people throw things around or leave their rubbish in the rooms they don't consider the cleaners who have to tidy up after them constantly.

Similarly, it is also unfair to the teachers who have to spend their entire day in that room which is now occupied with litter and untidiness, because people don't think before acting. Overall, the school is a very clean and tidy environment but like all things there is room for improvement.

# Comment

## The end of an era

Grace Scott

As you know I am Grace Scott - the editor of the school's newspaper. Since becoming editor, I've had various brilliant experiences and communications that have caused me to truly love writing, as a form of self-expression and self-growth.

Since beginning in my position, I've been able to work with a team of all different kinds of people and also I have been free to write about topics that excite my mind which was extremely significant to me. I am of course, extremely proud of everyone in this club and the work and effort they have put into the articles and papers to make them the best they have been - their help, support and calibre of writing has been greatly appreciated and will thus be greatly missed.

My recent departure from this position is indisputably upsetting however I could not be more excited and eager to witness what the next editors of our paper will initiate and invite into the club - I wish you the best of luck! I advise anybody out there who has even just a slight affinity or ardour for writing, journalism, politics or anything for that matter, to join the newspaper club - be welcomed into a warm, amiable environment and be encouraged to freely express any visions or ideas you feel passionate about. This place is perfect for it!

I want the legacy of the newspaper club to be carried on for years going forward and I want it to be the same safe, accepting and passionate kinds of people and concepts, I have been so privileged to work with. Not only has the newspaper club been a place of writing and publishing, it's become a place of inspiration, vehemence and belonging. I truly believe that. Even though this may be the end of an era for me as editor, I know and hope that the same talented, vibrant and creative atmosphere will still remain here for years to come.

## The Green Comet

Emily Hurrell

After not being visible for the last 50,000 years, the green comet has finally returned to the night sky. The rare comet, also known as C/2022 E3 (ZTF), is a ball of ice, rock and dust which releases glowing gasses, hence the nickname "green comet". For one week, people will have the opportunity to attempt to spot it before it disappears from our visibility, possibly never to be seen again. The comet's chances of passing the Earth another time have been calculated by astronomers through orbital computations and it is most probable this will be the final time.

On Wednesday (1st February), the comet did have its perigee, meaning it was be perceivable to the naked human eye, though it may be able to be spotted all through this week, if skies in the Northern Hemisphere are clear. As this rare comet has not appeared since the Stone Age, it is very much a once in a lifetime opportunity. If you are planning on watching for the comet, astronomers have advised stargazers to allow their eyes to adjust to the dark environment. To do this, wait for approximately half an hour without looking at a light source such as a phone. This will properly allow your eyes to be accustomed to the darkness. Have you seen it?

## The Big Parklands Paper

Editor: Grace Scott

If you have any comments on the content of the paper, wish to suggest future articles or want to submit a report to the paper, please email:

[newspaper@parklandsacademy.co.uk](mailto:newspaper@parklandsacademy.co.uk)

## Want to write for the Big Parklands Paper?

Join the newspaper team at break, every Thursday in W01.