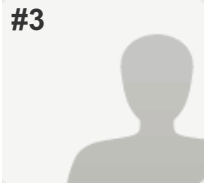


#3



**COMPLETE**

**Collector:** Web Link (Web Link)

**Started:** Wednesday, October 23, 2013 11:19:41 AM

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## PAGE 1: About you

**Q1: What's your organisation called?**

Redlingfield Parish Council

**Q2: What's your email address (so we can get in touch if we need to)?**

pc@redlingfield.suffolk.gov.uk

**Q3: Where in the UK is your organisation based (England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland)?**

England

## PAGE 2: Third party campaigning

**Q4: What sort of campaigning does your organisation want to do ahead of elections (irrespective of legislation at this stage)?**

Any issues that local people want us to

**Q5: Is policy campaigning important ahead of elections in a democracy? If so, why? And what is your organisation trying to achieve?**

Yes it is important - politicians must understand how ordinary people feel

**Q6: Is it right that civil society organisations - from charities and campaigning groups to community groups, bloggers and think tanks - should seek to influence the policy positions of political parties, elected politicians and candidates? If so why?**

Yes it is right - it is the duty of politicians to listen to the public

**Q7: Is it right that voters should understand politicians' policy positions and what civil society think about these positions? Or would that information unduly influence voters?**

Voters should all understand what politicians policy positions are - otherwise they will not be making informed choices when they vote - ignorance is not bliss

**Q8: What principles should the regulation of campaigning activity ahead of elections be based on?**

I don't believe it needs regulating at all

## PAGE 3: The existing law

**Q9: What transparency is needed in relation to donors who give money towards a campaign run by a civil society organisation? (e.g. size of donations that should be made public, timescale ahead of elections, whether donations explicitly for election-related campaigning should be published or all donations to organisations that campaign ahead of elections)**

The total amounts donated would be fine but it's not clear what "election related" actually means - if it means anything at all

**Q10: Are you concerned about any current lack of transparency about campaigning activity by civil society organisations ahead of elections or the money that funds them? If so please give an example.**

I am not concerned at all

# Written Evidence - Commission on Civil Society and Democratic Engagement

**Q11: Should the regulation of campaigning activities by civil society organisations be based on regulation for political parties? (Eg. Should spending limits for be based on a percentage of political party spending? Should definitions of campaigning activity be based on that of political parties? If so, why?)**

Civil society should NOT be restrained - it should NOT be regulated.  
This bill seeks to disenfranchise the ordinary citizen who is trying to communicate with the people in power.

**Q12: Do you think the existing law regulating civil society campaigning ahead of elections works, or are changes needed? What changes, if any, would you propose and why?**

There is no reason to change things -

**Q13: Part 2 of the Lobbying Bill proposes to introduce changes to the current regulation of non-party campaigning ahead of elections - how do you think they would affect your organisation's campaigning activity? You may wish to draw on your organisation's plans for the next General Election, or on campaigns you ran at the last election.**

They potentially would prevent us from contacting politicians - it could prevent us from - for example seeking to ameliorate the impact of government cuts on the most vulnerable in our community or prevent us pushing to see greater environmental protection or more affordable housing locally. As drafted - it looks like a gag to us. This is the UK - not China or Burma - freedom of speech is vitally important -

## PAGE 4: Impact of the Lobbying Bill Part 2 - case studies

**Q14: Are there specific examples of campaigning activity that you have planned, or that has happened in the past, which: a) could not happen under the Lobbying Bill, or which you think would be affected b) would be much more difficult under the Lobbying Bill c) you would be deterred from carrying out for fear of coming close to or falling foul of the law**

Campaigning regarding government cuts, environmental policy, affordable housing, benefits cuts, cuts to local government services, NHS changes etc etc

## PAGE 5: The new limits & the passage of the legislation

**Q15: Do you agree with the new expenditure threshold for third parties registering with the Electoral Commission? (£5,000 in England, £2,000 in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales) If not, why not? Do you have any suggestions for what the thresholds should be?**

There should be no limits on civil society

**Q16: Do you agree with the new limits, including staff costs, on non-party political spending in the 12 months leading up to an election? (£320,000 in England, £35,000 in Scotland, £24,000 in Wales and £11,000 in Northern Ireland) If not, why not? What do you think the limit should be?**

Civil society should not be gagged

**Q17: Do you agree with the limits on constituency spending as set out in the Bill? (£9,750 per constituency in the year before an election) If not, why not? What limits do you think would be appropriate?**

Civil society should not be gagged

**Q18: If your organisation is based in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, what do you think the particular effects would be on your campaigning activity ahead of elections? You might want to consider the implications for devolved administration elections and any differences in how civil society engages with politics and democratic processes.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

**Q19: Do you think there should be a pause in the passage of Part 2 of the Lobbying Bill? If yes, why? How long do you think a pause would be needed?**

This bill should be thrown out NOW! This is yet another example of bad legislation, badly drafted in ways that will cause chaos and have very unfortunate unintended consequences - unless of course the actual idea is to make it impossible for ordinary people to try and influence what the government is doing

**Q20: If this Bill passes, do you think the Electoral Commission should consult civil society before drafting guidance? If so how would your organisation expect to be consulted?**

If this bill passes it will be a disaster

PAGE 6: Any final thoughts?

**Q21: Please share any other thoughts your organisation has for the Commission on Civil Society and Democratic Engagement.**

Civil society should not be gagged! This bill seems designed to do just that.