

**INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO  
CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE WILBERFORCE ACADEMY  
HELD AT WORCESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD  
5-11 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**BY  
MICHAEL STEWART, SOLICITOR**

**21 FEBRUARY 2022**

# **Michael Stewart**

## **Solicitor**

Trust, charity and philanthropy lawyer since 1981;

Senior Partner, Camerons Solicitors LLP since 2005;

Founder of the Charity Law Association;

Author of various books and papers on charity law;

Formerly Associate Fellow, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of London;

Member of advisory panel, Charity Commission of Northern Ireland;

Formerly member of advisory committee, Charity Unit, University of Liverpool;

Formerly Chairman of Independent Review Panels in the NHS, 1993-2005, chaired many inquiries into complaints in the NHS;

Formerly and currently trustee of a number of trusts, charities and non-governmental organisations, based in UK and abroad, including currently the Oxford Ophthalmological Congress.

## INTRODUCTION

1. Christian Concern approached me on 1st February 2022 and asked me to conduct an independent inquiry into certain aspects of the behaviour of those attending a Wilberforce Academy conference held at Worcester College, Oxford on 5-11 September 2021. Christian Concern is the parent body of the Wilberforce Academy.
2. I was handed a small bundle of correspondence exchanged between the College and Christian Concern in the wake of the conference. This provided the background which explained why Christian Concern thought that an independent inquiry to establish facts was necessary. They hoped I would be able to complete the inquiry by 21<sup>st</sup> February. I agreed to keep to that timescale, on the understanding that my questions to those who attended the conference could be put to them by email. This was agreed.
3. This report of my inquiry is entirely based on (a) the bundle of correspondence between Worcester College and Christian Concern, (b) the email responses and statements from those who attended the conference and (c) various documents mentioned below which I requested from Christian Concern. I have received no oral testimony. Not having any personal knowledge of my own to contribute, I can only rely on the written responses I have received.
4. These responses came from 82 out of the 84 delegates at the conference. There were other people present — faculty, Christian Concern staff and volunteers and a small number of guests. I shall use the shorthand ‘faculty’ to describe them. Some faculty members stayed all week. Others were only present for a few hours. The total number of faculty was 40. I have received responses from 32 of them. Altogether, I have therefore received as of today responses from 114 of the 124 attendees at the conference (91.9%).
5. Words in italics are quotations from the evidence I have received.

## THE CONFERENCE – SOME CONTEXT

6. The Wilberforce Academy has for eleven years held a week-long conference every year, barring 2020, in a variety of venues. The Wilberforce Academy is billed as *equipping the next generation of Christian leaders in public life*.
7. Two faculty members summed up the 2021 Wilberforce Academy to me as:
  - 7.1. *Involving a stimulating range of speakers from different areas of public life, encouraging delegates to think deeply and creatively about how the Christian faith interacts with the public square. Delegates came from a wide variety of backgrounds, and break-out sessions encouraged them to exchange viewpoints based on their own experiences*
  - 7.2. *An intellectually stimulating event. One of the things that struck me most was the diverse views held by the delegates I spoke to at break and meal times and the willingness of so many of them to voice these views, disagree with each other and explore each others’ opinions*
8. The 2021 Wilberforce Academy was the first conference to be held at Worcester College after the lifting of Covid restrictions.

9. All the delegates stayed in accommodation within the College. So did almost all those faculty members who stayed overnight. The conference venue was the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre in the College. The exclusive use of this building meant that *the conference functioned in an almost entirely self-contained manner*, with its own foyer space and four breakout rooms. Another four rooms nearby provided additional breakout space.
10. The week's timetable was described as *intense*. Delegates were fully occupied every day from 8:30am until their evening meal, and the evenings were in the main spent all together. They were expected to prepare for the next day's sessions and study a number of handouts. So they had little free time, though some did leave the College on a couple of evenings to take a look at the town.
11. Meals were generally taken in Hall. The delegates spent the rest of the day in or around the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre.
12. All this is important when one comes to consider how much opportunity the delegates had to mingle with others in the College.
13. Who else was resident in the College at the time? Very few members of the College, it seems. I have been told that the Provost courteously dropped in on the Monday evening to introduce himself to Christian Concern staff members who were preparing for the opening banquet in Hall. I refer below to a lecturer in history who spoke to a delegate at the coffee machine in Hall one breakfast. Otherwise, I have the impression that the conference largely had the College to itself. The exception was a small group of new students attending a parallel event, Opportunity Oxford, to prepare them for their impending admission to Oxford.
14. The Wilberforce Academy went well. As one faculty member put it, *"No friction or difficulty and I shall fondly remember my time at this beautiful location"*. It was therefore a shock when Christian Concern heard from Worcester College that complaints had been made about inappropriate behaviour during the conference, and the College was conducting an internal review.

#### **THE COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY WORCESTER COLLEGE AFTER THE CONFERENCE**

15. These were said to be the following:

##### Complaints from College staff:

1. *They gave feedback that some attendees were unduly demanding and difficult to deal with.*
2. *One member of College staff reported rudeness and a refusal to comply with the College's Covid 19 protocols in the Porters' Lodge.*

##### Complaints from College staff and students:

3. *They were upset for a variety of reasons, primarily:*

*(A) the content of leaflets that were distributed without consent in College to staff and students, beyond the confines of the conference centre at the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre.*

[A fellow of the College characterised this to a third party as *aggressive leafletting*]

*(B) some unsolicited approaches by attendees to staff and students within the College in respect of various issues, especially LGBT conversion therapy. These occurred in the main during breakfast in Hall and in the foyer of the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre and the area outside it.*

[A fellow of the College characterised this to a third party as *harassment of students and staff outside the confines of the conference*]

### **REACTION BY CHRISTIAN CONCERN**

16. Christian Concern replied to the College by saying they would conduct their own investigation to try to uncover the truth or otherwise of the allegations by seeking statements from the attendees. They asked the College for further details of the complaints they said they had received. They asked for copies or records of the complaints, and further details of (or descriptions of) the complainants and the alleged perpetrators. Since the Wilberforce Academy had *not* distributed any leaflets at the conference, could they please see the leaflet about which the College said complaints had been received?

17. Mr Wilf Stephenson, Interim Finance and Estates Bursar at the College, who was conducting the internal College review of the complaints, replied to these points on 6 January 2022 as follows:

17.1. *I am afraid that I am unable to provide the detailed information you have requested. What I am, however, able to tell you is that the majority of the complaints I have received came from students attending College for an Opportunity Oxford pre-term programme held at the same time as your own conference. The information provided does not enable me to identify any of your delegates. The alleged incidents appear to have occurred in the main during breakfast in Hall and in the foyer of the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre and the area outside it. I have not been able to obtain a copy of the leaflets that were alleged to have been distributed.*

18. Christian Concern replied that they had seen no evidence whatsoever to substantiate the allegations, but were commissioning an inquiry by an independent lawyer to obtain evidence from Wilberforce Academy attendees. After the inquiry had reported, they would be happy to discuss its findings with the College.

### **MY CONTACT WITH THE COLLEGE**

19. When Christian Concern asked me to conduct an independent inquiry, I too sought assistance from Mr Stephenson in the hope of being able to narrow the scope of the allegations.

20. With regard to the negative feedback from staff, I asked him whether he could be more specific as to the category of staff who gave this feedback. Were they members of the events team, catering staff, cleaning staff, or what? With regard to the leaflets, was it possible for him to let me know what the

complainants had told him about the leaflets? What did the leaflets look like? What was their upsetting content? Did he have any idea of the quantity of leaflets distributed? Had the complainants given any description of the perpetrators of the activities alleged? I put it to him that the students and staff who had been upset to be harassed by these activities would surely retain a clear memory of the perpetrators. Were they male or female, at least? How many such incidents had been reported?

21. It was disappointing that Mr Stephenson did not acknowledge either my request or my chase-up. The result is that this inquiry is much less specific than I would have wished it to be.

## COMPLAINT 1

*College staff gave feedback that some attendees were unduly demanding and difficult to deal with*

22. It is far from satisfactory that the College has not been willing to disclose any further details underlying this alleged 'feedback', so that one can try and pinpoint how these perceptions were gained by members of College staff.

23. None of the attendees told me they could recall any disagreeable experiences or 'difficult moments' with members of staff. To the contrary, they universally used words such as *professional, warm, friendly, helpful, kind, very kind, lovely, accommodating, hospitable* to describe them.

24. One faculty member gave his impression as follows:

24.1. *The staff at the conference centre and in all other parts of the College, did an exceptional job. They were glad to be back at work, doing what they do best, especially the catering staff. Their professionalism shone through. From what I could see, this was entirely reciprocated by Wilberforce Academy delegates and faculty who showed their appreciation on a constant basis*

25. Attendees, however, did recall the following incidents which they thought could possibly have been interpreted as being unduly demanding and difficult:

25.1. A number of rooms were not ready for attendees as they arrived. *The College staff mentioned that they were struggling with staffing levels as they opened up after lockdown, and they felt understaffed at times.* However, the inconvenience was slight. Alternative rooms were rapidly found and everyone seemed happy.

25.2. There was some confusion over the seating plan for the Monday night banquet, as the finalised version had not been sent across in time to Rebecca Stewart, the College events manager. Eventually it was decided to do away with the seating plan. Apologies were given to Rebecca, who seemed happy to help to complete the setting up of the Hall.

25.3. A number of last minute changes to the timetable were required during the week, principally after one of the speakers found that, for personal reasons, he had to leave after presenting his session on the first day; he had been scheduled to speak through the week. *The College events team*

*were extremely accommodating.* A Christian Concern staff member who was one of the people responsible for communicating the changes, mainly to Rebecca, added that she had *built up a good relationship with Rebecca whereby it would have been easy for her to communicate any concerns or complaints about the behaviour of delegates or faculty.*

25.4. Some of the sessions overran. Apologies were given. Again, the College events team were described as *very accommodating.*

25.5. A *small issue* was reported with regard to the room and key of a delegate on the Friday night. This was rapidly resolved.

25.6. A delegate reported that during a coffee break she *politely asked* whether she could have a fresh mug as there was a little debris inside the mug she had been offered. The member of staff concerned obliged, but the delegate *was not sure if I might have offended her by asking.*

25.7. A faculty member requested that a first aider come to Hall one lunchtime when she sprained her ankle. *The first aider very kindly got me an icepack.*

25.8. A faculty member *visited the Porters' Lodge one morning to ask if there was a coffee shop nearby. The Porter could not have been more helpful.*

26. To balance these possibilities that attendees might have been judged to be unduly demanding or making inappropriate requests, it is fitting to set reactions from the College staff such as the following. They come, respectively, from representatives of the events, catering and cleaning teams:

26.1. Rebecca and the events team were publicly thanked by all the delegates on the final day and were given flowers and chocolates in appreciation. *Rebecca and another staff member seemed visibly moved, expressing their thanks for the gifts and their gratitude for our staying there and how pleased they were to host us. They thanked us for our politeness and kindness towards the College staff. The entire cohort of delegates and Christian Concern staff witnessed Rebecca telling us that she would be delighted to welcome us back again next year.*

26.2. A faculty member recalled Sarah, the Catering Manager, *singing the praises of the Christian Concern team and delegates. She personally thanked me for being such wonderful guests. She said she had never experienced customers as friendly and full of love as us. She ended the conversation by saying, "I wish you guys could be our guests here forever".*

26.3. A College staff member who was cleaning the conference venue early one morning initiated a conversation by saying that *everyone at Wilberforce Academy had been so polite.* The staff member went on to say that *whilst most on campus are usually polite, delegates of the Wilberforce Academy had been particularly polite.*

27. All this tends to reinforce the impression of goodwill left on many attendees, such as:

27.1. *I saw a lot of kind words from attendees to College staff*

27.2. *Relations between College staff and the attendees were cordial throughout and staff were grateful for the thoughtfulness shown to them. If they had had a complaint, they would have brought it to the Wilberforce team*

28. No attendee reported anything to the contrary.

29. Several attendees expressed surprise to me that, if it was the case that the College staff were finding attendees unduly demanding and difficult, this was not raised with the organiser of the conference or any of his team at the time. One can infer from the above quotations of the words of Rebecca of the events team and of Sarah of the catering team that neither of them were aware of complaints either.

30. No attendee recognised this complaint or witnessed the alleged behaviour. In the absence of further details, it is not possible to comment further.

## COMPLAINT 2

*One member of College staff reported rudeness and a refusal to comply with the College's Covid 19 protocols in the Porters' Lodge*

31. As the organiser of the conference commented, *I find this allegation confusing, because the College had no Covid restrictions in September. This had been confirmed with the events team verbally.*

32. This is borne out by Worcester College's Covid-19 Update for September 2021:

32.1. *In line with the wider University and the changes in government guidance, College has removed the requirements for mandatory face coverings and social distancing on the College site. We will be resuming most of our normal College activities for Michaelmas Term and reopening spaces that have had to remain closed during earlier phases of the pandemic. Normal lunch and dinner will resume ...*

33. Hence comments from attendees such as:

33.1. *I was pleasantly surprised that I wasn't given a list of do's and don'ts about Covid on arrival or at any other time*

33.2. *No-one spoke to me about Covid rules while I was on the College campus*

34. It is not clear, therefore, what were the "College's Covid 19 protocols" referred to, and what it was that attendees were alleged to have rudely refused to comply with.

35. Nor do we know how many of the attendees were alleged to have behaved in this discourteous manner. Was it the majority, or was it one?

36. No attendee recalled any difficulty either with Covid protocols or at the Porter's Lodge. Attendees reported little of note in connection with the Porters' Lodge. Typical comment were:



- 36.1. *I didn't have any interaction with the Porters' Lodge except to greet them and thank them for their help*
- 36.2. *I had excellent relations with the Porters' Lodge and left very early, before breakfast, having thanked them for their hospitality*
- 36.3. *My experience with the staff at the Porters' Lodge was very pleasant and I recall our encounters as friendly and joyful*
- 36.4. *I saw only positive and supportive conversations occurring between staff in the Porters' Lodge and Wilberforce Academy attendees*
37. We have already noted that an attendee asked at the Porters' Lodge about nearby coffee shops, when *the Porter could not have been more helpful.*
38. I find it surprising that, despite being asked directly about the alleged altercations at the Porters' Lodge, no attendee has any recollection of such a thing. If they occurred, they would surely have been remembered by the person or persons concerned, once their memory had been jogged.
39. Finally, I add the remark of a faculty member:
- 39.1. *I did not see any one from the Wilberforce Academy refuse to observe Covid related rules but there were other residents in the College*
40. No attendee recognised this complaint or witnessed the alleged behaviour. In the absence of further details, it is not possible to comment further.

### **COMPLAINT 3(A)**

*College staff and students were upset for a variety of reasons, primarily: the content of leaflets that were distributed without consent in College to staff and students, beyond the confines of the conference centre at the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre*

41. It is not possible to comment on the "variety of reasons" for upset suffered by staff and students without further details of these "reasons".
42. As for the complaint about an indeterminate number of leaflets allegedly being distributed to College staff and students, a Christian Concern staff member has affirmed that:
- 42.1. *There were no leaflets given to faculty or delegates during the event. I saw no-one handing out leaflets of any kind during the week, let alone any aggressive leafletting. No example of any such leaflet has been produced to my knowledge*
43. All attendees affirmed to me that they did not hand out leaflets or see anyone else doing so.

44. One should also consider the sparse free time available to delegates during the week. In a lightly populated College during the summer vacation, I conjecture that it would have taken some time and much determination to track down and accost potential recipients of leaflets and force the leaflets upon them.
45. I investigated what other possible sources of 'leakage' of leaflets might have occurred.
46. The conference was permitted to have a bookstall in the foyer of the conference centre. I have been informed that this consisted of books only, and that there was nothing there that could plausibly be described as a leaflet.
47. I requested, and have been provided with, copies of the handouts provided by the speakers during the week. Again, none of them could plausibly be described as a leaflet.
48. A member of Christian Concern staff who was responsible for packing up at the end of the conference has confirmed that she had a thorough check and no materials of any kind were left behind.
49. We are no closer to identifying the leaflets or the distributors of them.
50. It will be recalled that Mr Stephenson told Christian Concern on 6 January 2022, "*I have not been able to obtain a copy of the leaflets that were alleged to have been distributed*". It would be good to know if he has had greater success since. I find it surprising that he repeated the allegation about leafletting without having seen a copy of the leaflet. Surely it is the case that if someone wishes to make a credible complaint about a leaflet which has been thrust at them, and which they have discovered has objectionable content, inevitably they produce the leaflet so its objectionable content can be plain to all. In this case, the allegation seems to involve a number of leaflets and a number of College staff and students. I find it remarkable that not one of them had produced the leaflet they complain about, some four months after the event.
51. This allegation has been denied by all attendees. I do not consider it possible to take investigation of it further without sight of a copy of the leaflet complained about.

### **COMPLAINT 3(B)**

*College staff and students were upset for a variety of reasons, primarily: some unsolicited approaches by attendees to staff and students within the College in respect of various issues, especially LGBT conversion therapy. These occurred in the main during breakfast in Hall and in the foyer of the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre and the area outside it*

52. On the second sentence of the complaint, the foyer of the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre was exclusively reserved for the conference. Besides College staff, I have had it confirmed that no 'outsiders' were seen to enter this space during the conference, other than the architect of the building who brought some family members to see it.

### Conversations with College staff

53. Several attendees recalled conversations with College staff. These were mainly of a general nature, for example:

53.1. *I enjoyed cordial conversations with College staff during the conference. I do not recall having any conversations about public policy or related issues. Nor do I recall witnessing any such conversations involving attendees and College staff*

53.2. *The College staff were very hospitable and I interacted with them politely and pleasantly. There were no conversations or incidents of concern*

53.3. *On numerous occasions I witnessed very friendly and positive conversations between College staff and delegates, with delegates thanking staff and they in turn responding very favourably*

54. I include the following reported conversation between a delegate and a lecturer in history as an example of a conversation at breakfast time:

54.1. *I can recall a conversation during breakfast with a lecturer in history. She was at the coffee machine and I said good morning. She asked what we were doing and I explained we were at a conference that explored biblical ethics and how to be a Christian in public life. We discussed race, privilege, statues (BLM) and the issues we could both see in our society. She said thanks for the conversation and we had to go*

55. Three attendees recalled conversations with College staff who had expressed interest in what the conference was about:

55.1. *I was approached by a member of staff after breakfast one morning and we had a very general conversation about what the Wilberforce Academy was about. We did not discuss conversion therapy. It was a more general conversation about Christianity*

55.2. *I was approached by College staff with questions about the event both at coffee breaks and at lunch. I did not start the conversations. They asked me about it, mainly a male and a female member of staff. They said they would love to see more of these courses*

55.3. *When I was having breakfast towards the end of the week, the Hall staff asked me how the week was going. I responded with a somewhat generic reply that the week was going great and it's been really awesome to build my faith. I did not have any conversations with staff about the contents of the programme*

56. It should be noted that in all cases it was the staff who initiated the conversations.

57. No attendee recalled making an unsolicited approach to a member of staff to discuss a controversial topic or witnessing such an approach.

### Conversations with students on the Opportunity Oxford programme

58. A number of interactions were recalled with students on this programme. I set them out below in extenso, in the interests of clarity:

58.1. *I did speak to a young man from another programme. I mistook him for one of the Wilberforce Academy delegates and for a short time we talked about faith. He said he'd never looked into Christianity because his parents didn't speak much about it. I encouraged him to seek the truth for himself. That topic ended as we queued up for breakfast. When we sat down we got into a general chat about his goals for the future in regard to courses and careers*

58.2. *During breakfast one day there were two students at the table. They asked me what is the conference about and I replied simply that it exposes a Christian perspective on different subjects such as education, health, law. Conversion therapy was not mentioned*

58.3. *At breakfast on Thursday I had a conversation with a guy called Bertie and a blonde girl. Both were on the OO programme. We had briefly spoken the day before so when I saw them speaking to some Wilberforce Academy delegates, I joined them. We discussed statues. This was a project they were working on during the programme and I agreed with them on how historical statues may no longer represent current views. I asked what they would replace the statues with (this was also part of the project) and they mentioned stairs, as anyone could climb them and become a hero (something along those lines). I then caused them to consider that their statue could be knocked down in 50-100 years. I remember saying that we shouldn't aim to be reflective of the current time alone as that may change, but to consider an eternal truth that would transcend time (something along those lines). Towards the end of the conversation, another man with dark hair and black painted nails joined with a lady with wet brunette hair and a green hoodie. Bertie and the blonde lady nodded in agreement with our conversation while the other two began speaking about the deadlines involved in the programme. At this time I was running late and said my goodbyes. Bertie and the blonde girl (maybe Emily) also said bye*

58.4. *As I was walking back after dinner to my accommodation one night at about 10pm, I held a door open for two students who were behind me. This caused them to ask me if I was one of the Wilberforce Academy delegates. I said I was and that it had been a really amazing time so far, and that the best part was meeting all the people because they were so nice. The students (a boy and a girl) then said they had picked up one of the Wilberforce Academy brochures in the Hall and looked at the schedule. They said the topics all looked interesting. They were particularly interested in the LGBT topics and wanted to ask me about the conversion therapy talk. I didn't go into any detail about anything we'd discussed, but said it had been very interesting to talk about. Everything was very well received and it was smiley and chatty. After a couple of minutes asking them what they were studying and general chit chat, I left and went to my accommodation. [Note: this conversation took place on the way to the attendee's accommodation, in the direction of the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre. So it could possibly be described as occurring "in the area outside the Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre"]*

58.5. *I was having breakfast on Saturday morning with delegates. While we eating a young lady joined us and we started chatting with her about Oxford and how beautiful the College was. Assuming she was part of the Wilberforce Academy, I asked her how the event had been for her. She said she was not at the event, but then she said she had heard the event was teaching conversion*

*therapy. I told her I did not hear anyone teaching conversion therapy at the event, and this event was not about converting people, but rather training leaders on how to engage with the world and culture. The chat was very cordial and she never expressed any sadness or anxiety or worry to any of us at the table. She was chatting happily about how excited she was to be starting her studies in anthropology*

58.6. *During breakfast on Saturday, I witnessed a conversation between a delegate on the Wilberforce Academy and a girl on the OO programme with shoulder-length brown hair if I remember correctly. I believe the conversation started when she asked if we at the Wilberforce Academy were involved with a speaker talking about conversion therapy. I cannot remember anything else that was discussed. (I was ill that morning). The whole conversation was amicable, with another delegate outlining 1. What we believe Conversion Therapy to be and 2. Why there aren't issues with it. It was not confrontational, and I don't remember the conversation continuing on that subject once that had been explained. The rest of the conversation mainly revolved around how the students got into Oxford through the interview process etc.*

58.7. *At breakfast on Saturday morning, I got talking to a delegate I had not seen before. We were sitting opposite a student who we chatted to for some time about life, studies, Oxford etc. I think she was studying archaeology. Just before she was about to leave she wanted to know if she could ask us a question. We invited it and she wanted to know if there was a session on conversion therapy. We explained that the session actually involved a series of testimonies from people who had walked away from a previous lifestyle and suggested that if she wanted to she should look into that area further as the name conversion therapy is a serious misnomer. We said goodbye and wished her well for her coming studies*

58.8. *At Saturday morning breakfast, I picked up a cooked breakfast and looked for a spare seat. I chose a space diagonally opposite a young man, where there was a sizable gap. I greeted the young man. He introduced himself as Bertie. He had fair skin and brown hair which he wore in a ponytail. I asked him whether he was with the Wilberforce Academy. He explained he was with OO. I asked how long the OO ran for. He stated they had another week together. He asked the same about the Wilberforce Academy. I explained it was our final morning. I asked him about the OO and he explained it was a precursor to the beginning of term at Oxford as a student. I congratulated him on getting into Oxford and asked what he would be studying. He said modern languages. I believe one was Russian. Bertie stated that some students had found a Wilberforce Academy handbook, including an itinerary, and he said there had been a discussion amongst the students at OO about conversion therapy being on the timetable. He then directly asked what we were talking about in reference to this. I explained that we had discussed what conversion therapy means and that the morally wrong and harmful practices most people consider conversion therapy (e.g. shock therapies) were already rightly against the law in the UK. I stated that we also discussed the current push to outlaw conversion therapy which means something different and would actually now be criminalising consenting conversations about same-sex attraction, preventing people who are unhappy with their same-sex attraction to seek information about alternative points of view to affirmation, if they so wished. Bertie listened with apparent interest and did not question me further. We parted on very friendly terms*

59. The above accounts put the true facts and sequence of events beyond much doubt.

60. An attendee had left behind a Wilberforce Academy handbook in Hall. A copy of the handbook had been given to all attendees and contained an introduction by the Director of the Wilberforce Academy, a timetable of events during the week, biographies of all the speakers (with images), a listing of the delegates (with images), a listing of Christian Concern staff (with images), and a map of the College. This dropped copy had been picked up by students who noted the 'LGBT and Change' session and the speaker's name on the timetable. The students had discussed this among themselves and by breakfast time on Saturday were ready to raise the subject of conversion therapy with attendees. Thereafter it appears that some of them made complaints to the College.
61. By what process allegations on the part of the College staff (complaints 1, 2, 3(A) and 3(B)) were tacked on to the allegations of the students one can only surmise.
62. From the evidence I have received I draw the following conclusions about Complaints 3(A) and 3(B) with reasonable confidence:
63. Complaint 3(A), concerning attendees causing upset to College staff and students by distributing leaflets to them without consent, is without substance. There is no evidence that any leaflets were distributed. It seems that what reached the hands of the student who picked it up was one copy of the Wilberforce Academy handbook left by mistake in Hall.
64. Complaint 3(B), concerning attendees causing upset to College staff and students by making unsolicited approaches to them in respect of various issues, especially LGBT conversion therapy, is without substance. From the evidence, it is clear that no such unsolicited approaches were made to College staff or students. The opposite occurred. From the evidence, seven students broached the subject of conversion therapy with attendees.
65. I finish with three excerpts from evidence I received from faculty. I make no comment on them.
- 65.1. *The allegations that have been made regarding inappropriate behaviour are not in keeping with my own experiences with the delegates with whom I had the pleasure of teaching and interacting. I found them unfailingly courteous and, in their debates with each other, mature and respectful*
- 65.2. *I really struggle to see any truth in the allegations by Worcester College*
- 65.3. *I find it very sad that people are spreading lies when the week was a very positive week where many of today's issues could be discussed in love and respect*