



## 'Gay cake' appeal: Christian bakers Ashers lose appeal

*The Christian owners of a Northern Ireland bakery have lost their appeal against a ruling that their refusal to make a "gay cake" was discriminatory.*

**appeal:** request for a judge's decision to be changed

**refuse:** to say "no"

**ice:** to decorate a cake with a sugary topping

**deeply held religious views:** strong opinion, beliefs

**ruling:** a decision made by a judge

**court:** the place where justice is administered

**object to sth:** to strongly disagree with sth

Two years ago, the family-run firm **refused** to make a cake **iced** with the slogan: "Support Gay Marriage". The order was placed at its Belfast shop by gay rights activist Gareth Lee.

Appeal court judges said that, under law, the bakers were not allowed to provide a service only to people who agreed with their religious beliefs.

*Speaking publicly for the first time about the case, Mr Lee said he was both "relieved" and "grateful to the appeal court judges."*

The firm argued that the cake's message was against the bakers' religious **views**.

At that time, the judge said she accepted that Ashers bakery had genuine and **deeply held religious views**, but said the business was not above the law.

In reaction to the **ruling**, Daniel McArthur from Ashers said he was extremely disappointed, adding that it undermined democratic freedom, religious freedom and free speech. "If equality law means people can be punished for politely refusing to support other people's causes then equality law needs to change," he said.

They had served Mr Lee before and said they would be happy to serve him again. "We have always said it's not about the customer, it's about the message."

In **court** the following week, three judges said it did not follow that icing a message meant you supported that message.

In their ruling, they clarified that the fact that a baker provides a cake for a particular football team or **portrays** witches on a Halloween cake does not indicate any support for either.

The judges also said that Ashers would not have **objected to** a cake carrying the message: "Support Heterosexual Marriage" or indeed "Support Marriage".

They understood that it was the use of the word 'gay' in the context of the message which prevented the order from being fulfilled. As such, the reason that the order was cancelled was that the bakery would not provide a cake with a message supporting a right to marry for those of a particular sexual orientation.

*"This was a case of association with the gay and bisexual community and the protected personal characteristic was the sexual orientation of that community. As such, this was direct discrimination."*

The family's **appeal** was heard in May, but the judgement was reserved.

Adapted from <http://www.bbc.com/news>

*This cake displays a picture of Sesame Street's beloved Bert and Ernie - two male characters who live together - beneath the slogan 'Support Gay Marriage'*

## Weekly English Practice

17th November 2016

English Coaching Projects S.Coop.

[weeklyenglishpractice.wordpress.com](http://weeklyenglishpractice.wordpress.com)



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## "Let's chat about that!"

Write your answers in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

Give reasons for your answers

- Why didn't the bakery want to make the "gay" cake?
- How would you feel if a bakery refused to make a cake for you?
- Do you think the court's decision was fair? Why (not)?
- What advice would you give the bakery the next time this situation arises?
- Have you ever been to a same-sex wedding?



# “iLook, iThink, iSpeak” Express yourself better!

## Look at these funny cake ‘fails’

How does this happen? Which is your favourite?  
Have you seen anything like this? Or done something similar?  
Can you think of any ‘chain of communication’ mistakes at work or at home? What was the original message/command and what happened in the end? Who did it involve?

**Fail** noun  
(Slang.)  
**an embarrassing or humorous mistake**



**Practise your listening and presentation skills in English!!**



**Friday 2nd December**  
**@The Molineux Bar @The ECP Hub**



**Starting @ 20.00**

**Come and practise your listening and presentation skills in English!!**

If you would like to do a **FRED TALK**, please let us know.

Talk for a maximum of 8 minutes on any topic of your choice.  
And if you don't fancy speaking, simply come down to the ECP Hub and support your fellow students by listening to them!

Free food and drinks.

**Come and practise your social English :-)**