

British Humanist Association

Annual Review 2015

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I Introduction



First of all, let me please say: thank you. This has been a year of increased visibility for us and much success, too. All the achievements and initiatives you'll read about in this review have been made possible thanks to the support, enthusiasm, and generosity of our members. We have a lot to celebrate.

But there are a number of things to consider as we move into the remainder of 2015. The makeup of the Commons is radically different than it was before, and this has meant the loss of some of our best humanist activists in the House of Commons and the All Party Parliamentary Humanist Group. The general election also returned a Conservative Party majority Government, and this could present added difficulty for us. (You will remember from before the election that their manifesto was the least favourable to our positions.)

However, it's worth remembering that lobbying in Parliament is not the only way we can achieve policy changes. We have a chance in the next few years to pursue many of our issues through legal action, as in the case of assisted dying and Humanism on the curriculum. We will also continue our extra-parliamentary work on scrutinising and bringing to regulatory and public attention outrages

like unfair school admissions and otherwise holding the Government to account. We also shouldn't underestimate the possibility that some individual ministers may turn out to be friendly to us and sympathetic to our positions.

What's more, it goes without saying that although the Parliament of the last five years was certainly more favourable to us than this new one, the Government of the last five years was not particularly more so! Nonetheless the BHA has thrived in that time, increasing our membership numbers, our number of ceremonies, and our number of Partner Groups around the country.

In the past year, we've also expanded the quality and extent of our events programme while establishing new streams of work like our pastoral support programme and our community-based sections. We've been able to do this because we're not just an advocacy group concerned with influencing public policy, but a social and cultural movement. This will of course continue whatever the attitudes of those in power. We hope you will get a sense of the strength and vitality of this movement as you leaf through this round-up of our year's activities.

Andrew Copson
Chief Executive

The British Humanist Association is the national charity working on behalf of non-religious people who seek to live ethical and fulfilling lives on the basis of reason and humanity

Founded in 1896, we work with a network of over 40,000 members and supporters, as well as almost 100 local and special interest groups. These are the individuals who empower our work, who infuse it with energy and drive at every level, and whose commitment and generosity allow us to continue to make a difference.

Our policies are formed with the support of more than 150 of some of the world's most prominent thinkers and experts, including a number of scientists, philosophers, poets, novelists, and numerous academics. We seek to advance these policies with the help of more than 100 parliamentarians who are members of the All Party Parliamentary Humanist Group (APPHG).

WHAT DO WE WANT?

- A world where everyone lives cooperatively on the basis of shared human values, respect for human rights, and concern for future generations
- To help non-religious people to be confident in living ethical and fulfilling lives on the basis of reason and humanity

WHAT DO WE DO?

- We promote Humanism, work on behalf of the non-religious, and support those who wish to live humanist lives, including through the provision of humanist ceremonies
- We campaign for a secular state, challenge religious privilege, and promote equal treatment in law and policy of everyone regardless of religion or belief
- We offer a humanist perspective in public debate, drawing on contemporary humanist thought and the worldwide humanist tradition

OUR VALUES

In all our work, we strive to embody our values by:

- Engaging in debate rationally, intelligently, and with attention to evidence
- Recognising the dignity of individuals and treating them with fairness and respect
- Respecting and promoting freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law
- Being cooperative, working with others of different beliefs for the common good
- Celebrating human achievement, progress and potential

We aim to arrive at a situation where Humanism is understood as an ethical and fulfilling non-religious approach to life involving a naturalistic view of the universe

It's our mission to improve public understanding of Humanism, both in formal education and in wider society. We also take part in dialogue work with religious groups to improve religious people's understanding of Humanism, too.

In education, we are proud to support 155 humanist representatives who participate in their local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). We are members of both the Religious Education Council of England and Wales and of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education. We also provide support and resources for teachers, including Religious Education (RE) teachers, through our website *Humanism for Schools*.

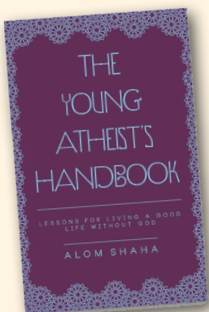
This year we expanded and developed our network of over 100 trained humanist volunteer school speakers who help to assist teachers with planning lessons which include Humanism. We also held an RE Teacher's Conference last July in Conway Hall which brought together 150 RE teachers to discuss how including Humanism in RE could boost pupil engagement and add to the overall quality of lessons.

After sending copies of *The Young Atheist's Handbook* to schools in England and Wales last year, we completed our crowdfunded initiative by sending copies to all the other secondary schools in the UK, meaning they're now on offer in

school libraries in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. We also sent copies to prisons and young offender institutions – because every young person has a right to come to their own decisions about what they believe.

We also helped to launch a brilliant new book for ages nine and up from Michael Rosen and Annemarie Young called *What is Humanism? How do you live without a god? And other big questions for kids*. The book is groundbreaking and features contributions from many of our Patrons, as well as our President, Jim Al-Khalili. We think it should be in every primary school in the country, and so we've launched a brand new fundraiser to do just that, too.

Meanwhile, our dialogue work is going from strength to strength. Last autumn was a particularly successful time, as we hosted a sold-out panel discussion on how humanists and Muslims can better understand each other's perspectives.



Fundraiser: justgiving.com/whatishumanism.
Please give what you can!

Events and lectures

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Between August 2014 and July 2015, we proudly hosted a number of public events, including our annual Darwin Day, Voltaire, and Bentham Lectures.

Once again the Darwin Day Lecture in central London was an enormous success. More than 1,000 people turned out to hear anthropologist Dr Eugenie Scott answer the question 'What would Darwin say to today's creationists?'



Sell-out success: Darwin Day lecturer Eugenie Scott

The event was chaired by our Patron, Professor Richard Dawkins, and marked Darwin's birthday on 12 February.

Professor Simon Blackburn was the speaker for our annual Bentham Lecture, which we co-host with University College London and the Humanist Philosophers Group. His talk focused on the writing of David Hume, and in particular examined his philosophy on matters of ethics and religion.

Our 2015 Voltaire Lecture took place in the grand hall of the Hilton Metropole on the theme 'Fighting Machetes with

Pens'. We were honoured to have Bonya Ahmed, humanist blogger and wife of the late Avijit Roy, as our speaker. She spoke about the attacks against humanists in Bangladesh and elsewhere of the sort which killed her husband, and why the fight for free expression must go on. The event was such a success that it even 'trended' nationwide on Twitter!

Our section the Centre for Inquiry UK also continued its programme of successful day conferences, tackling scientific and ethical questions from an evidence-based, humanist perspective with help from distinguished speakers and academics. It also appeared at the Oxford Literary Festival.

But that's not all! We also hosted events at the Wilderness Festival; organised book launches; appeared in panel debates on various political and cultural issues; and even hosted the UK premiere of Chris Johnson's film *A Better Life: An Exploration of Meaning and Joy in a World Without God*.

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION, UPCOMING EXHIBITION

This year we announced a brand new initiative to mark the 50th anniversary of the Happy Human: an all-ages photography competition on the theme of 'Happiness'! Entrants are encouraged to go to happyphotos.org.uk to learn more about the competition and to enter. Winning photos will receive a prize and a selection of the best will be exhibited in a central London gallery in November.



Conferences

It was a very special year for Humanism in Britain, as last summer we hosted the largest ever World Humanist Congress in Oxford. Then, this year, the BHA Annual Conference came to Bristol for a very special series of lectures coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the Happy Human.

WORLD HUMANIST CONGRESS

In August 2014, we were the proud hosts of the International Humanist and Ethical Union's 2014 World Humanist Congress, which we brought to the city of Oxford. The Congress is a triennial celebration of all things humanist, and with over 1,000 delegates turning out from 68 countries, ours was the largest and most international World Humanist Congress so far.

The theme for the weekend was a timely one: *'Freedom of thought and expression: Forging a 21st century*

Enlightenment', and so we brought together 78 speakers, among them renowned writers and artists, human rights activists from every continent, scientists, broadcasters, philosophers, theologians, historians... you name it. Headline speakers included A C Grayling, Richard Dawkins, Francesca Stavrakopoulou, Taslima Nasrin, Philip Pullman, Joan Bakewell, and Peter Tatchell.

As the weekend drew to a close, the assembled Congress passed the *Oxford Declaration on Freedom of Thought and Expression*, a defining statement of the commitment of humanists to protecting the right to free expression.



Our trustee Alom Shaha gives the Free Expression Award to Asif Mohiuddin on behalf of Bangladeshi bloggers



2014 Humanist of the Year: Aware Girls founder Gulalai Ismail





BHA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Following on from the record success of the World Humanist Congress, we took to Bristol in June for our 2015 Annual Conference, coinciding with World Humanist Day on 21 June.

It was a record-breaking event for us, bringing together 450 delegates for an enjoyable weekend of entertainment, discovery, and socialising. Our speakers included scientists such as Alice Roberts, Jim Al-Khalili, Richard Wiseman, and Caroline Watt, along with comedians Kate Smurthwaite and Jay Foreman, historian Tim Whitmarsh, human rights activist Leo Igwe, and the journalist Helen Lewis, among various others.

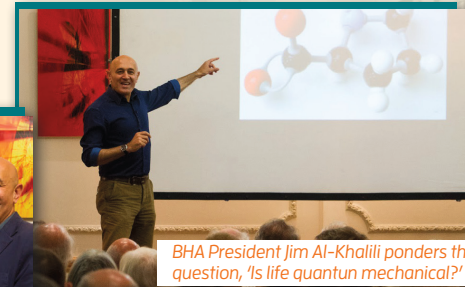
Themes were varied, spanning everything from quantum mechanics to feminism, ancient Greek Humanism, and the science of sleep. It all added up to one incredible weekend, with

more than 450 humanists in one place for a remarkable conference.

On the second day of the Conference, Alice Roberts received the 2015 Humanist of the Year Award in recognition of her science advocacy, campaigning (particularly around education), and overall work to promote greater understanding of Humanism. And very well-deserved it was too!



Alice Roberts receiving the 2015 Humanist of the Year Award



BHA President Jim Al-Khalili ponders the question, 'Is life quantum mechanical?'



Andrew Copson introducing BHA volunteers involves with BHA sections and the Humanist Care programme

Generous donors raised \$100,000 towards travel grants so that people could attend the World Humanist Congress from places where it's not easy to be a humanist, including delegates from Russia, Burma, Afghanistan, Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, and Pakistan.

We aim to arrive at a situation where people with humanist beliefs and values are supported in identifying themselves as humanists and in expressing those beliefs and values in their lives

LOCAL HUMANIST GROUPS

We've seen strong growth in local group activity this year, boasting 45 BHA Partner Groups and 21 Affiliate Groups in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and even an expatriates group in Spain. Thousands of you were involved with local group activities last year – spanning everything from book clubs, dinners, film nights, and socials through to charitable work and lectures from distinguished speakers. We anticipate further growth for BHA Partner Groups in the months to come.

THRIVING BHA SECTIONS



Our section for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender humanists adopted the spiffy new name LGBT Humanists just in time for its annual march at London Pride (pictured), following a very successful year. LGBT Humanists events included a fundraising

dinner with actor Mark Gatiss and a packed general election hustings with speakers from all the main political parties. It now has a meetup.com network of over 1,000 event attendees, and hundreds of full members.

In other news, our student section, the National Federation of Atheist, Humanist and Secular Student Societies (AHS) now

has member organisations at 25 universities across the UK and Ireland, and hosted popular conferences and conventions around the country.

Elsewhere, membership of Defence Humanists, our section for humanists within the Ministry of Defence and armed forces, has more than doubled (to 150) and both the Manchester and London-based British Humanist Choirs are going strong.



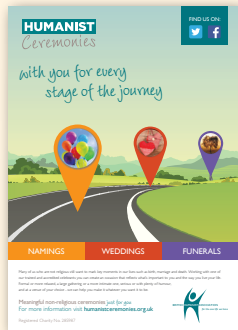
BRAND NEW SECTIONS

We also launched two brand new sections, the Young Humanists (for humanists aged 18–35) and a Welsh section, Wales Humanists. Young Humanists started with a bang, with launch parties in London, Bristol, and Birmingham, and since debuting in February has grown to 2,300 likes on Facebook. Meanwhile, Wales Humanists elected its first committee and will focus on Welsh policy and social issues.

Humanist lives

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The popularity of humanist ceremonies continues to grow as more and more of us look to mark life occasions in meaningful, authentic, and non-religious ways. Meanwhile, our humanist pastoral care programme is off the ground and providing assistance to non-religious people in hospitals and prisons.



INNOVATIVE CEREMONIES CAMPAIGNS

We installed Humanist Ceremonies™ posters in service stations across the country to advertise the availability of our humanist funeral, wedding, and naming ceremonies. Fittingly for a campaign aimed at motorists, the tagline was 'With you for every stage of the journey.'

NEW HUMANIST CEREMONIES WEBSITE

Demand for our celebrants is always on the increase, and a majority of enquiries now come through the web.

At the start of the year we overhauled the Humanist Ceremonies section of the BHA website with a sleek, modern design, with instant results – the site has seen twice as much traffic since February this year.



MEET 'HUMANIST CARE'

Our humanist pastoral support programme aims to provide pastoral care to non-religious people in hospitals and prisons, analogous to the support that religious people get from chaplains.

The programme is still in its infancy, but the training and induction of volunteers is well underway and the programme now has a name, Humanist Care, a brand identity, and a website of its own: humanistcare.org.uk.

Research conducted by our Head of Pastoral Support has shown that there is woefully inadequate support available for non-religious people, while people of every religious denomination have access to one-on-one pastoral care.

Being in hospital or prison can be a time of anxiety, fear, and distress for anyone, regardless of religion or belief. By providing 'like-minded' Humanist Care volunteers who can listen in a non-judgemental and compassionate way, we aim to make a real difference to people's lives.

HUMANIST CARE
The non-religious pastoral support network

Since last summer, we've trained 56 brand new celebrants – our network of celebrants continues to grow to meet demand for humanist ceremonies

Public engagement

We've been on the airwaves, in the papers, and out and about promoting Humanism and informing the public about our work. Our social media reach has grown and grown as well, making us a force to be reckoned with in the online world, too.



A LARGER ONLINE COMMUNITY THAN EVER

Since July last year, our **Facebook** reach has more than doubled, from an already whopping 65,000 followers to over 131,000 today. Meanwhile, our **Twitter** has grown at a steady pace as well, from 36,000 to well over 50,000. Our **Tumblr** account continues to draw in views and shares from a younger demographic, and we've had over a million views on **YouTube** since last summer as well.

This enormous growth has meant wonders for the reach and influence of humanists online. With help from our Patrons, we've capitalised on trending topics; brought visibility to our campaigns; and on Twitter, we were rewarded with 'Verified' status – the 'blue tick' – a mark of esteem given to major brands, public figures, and charities.



Haynes, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Bertrand Russell across London tubes and buses in Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool. It also highlighted the exclusion of humanists and their views from the BBC's *Thought for the Day* slot.

The campaign was a big hit on social media too, where many of our Patrons joined in with quotations of their own, all probing that same big question: 'What's it all for?'



'THOUGHT FOR THE COMMUTE'

'Thought for the Commute' featured humanist perspectives on the big questions from humanists such as Virginia Woolf, George Eliot, A C Grayling, Natalie

BHA SOCIAL MEDIA

-  [humanism](#)
-  [BHAhumanists](#)
-  [britishhumanistassociation](#)

NEW PATRONS

The last year was a significant one for our profile in the media and among new demographics, reaching more young people than ever before. Our widening visibility is in no small part down to the work of our Patrons, who help to promote awareness of our work in the public sphere.

New Patrons in the last year include musicians **Matt Healy** and **Simon Le Bon**, TV presenters **Dr Christian Jessen** and **Janet Ellis**, children's poet **Michael Rosen**, and sociologist **Colin Campbell**.

We aim to arrive at a situation where public debate and policy are shaped by humanist perspectives

With the general election on the horizon, it was more important than ever last year that we fought for airtime, publication space, and political action on a range of humanist causes, at home as well as internationally.

HUMANISM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The Government chose not to provide an option for studying Humanism as an alternative to a religion in its new English Religious Studies subject specification, despite previously inviting us to prepare content, and so we worked hard to show how much support there was for a broader and more balanced curriculum featuring non-religious views.



Even Rowan Williams backed our campaign

We organised open letters in support of our position. The first was signed by 113 teachers and subject experts, while the second was signed by prominent religious leaders, including the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams! Our position was also backed by both the National Association for RE Teachers and the RE Council for England and Wales. We are presently exploring legal options.

STEINER SCHOOLS EXPOSÉ

Late last summer we won a major Information Tribunal case against the Department for Education in order to acquire information on concerns about Steiner schools. These reports exposed serious concerns about the teaching of pseudoscience

and patterns of bullying and racism in Steiner schools, and we were able to secure time on *Newsnight* to discuss the report, helping spread vital public awareness about longstanding concerns relating to Steiner/Waldorf education.



NEW WELSH ORGAN DONATION LAW

Our longstanding policy on organ donation law received national coverage this year around several high-profile stories of organ transplants saving lives.

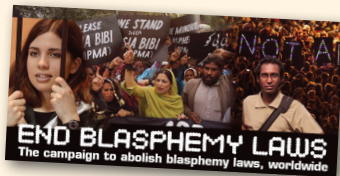
We're in favour of an opt-out organ donation law which will not only save countless lives but stop the black market for organs. The current 'opt-in' law promotes needless death and suffering on the presumption that we are superstitious about where our organs go.

After years of campaigning, a progressive opt-out law will finally take effect in Wales later this year. We'll keep on campaigning in the hope that the rest of the UK will follow suit.

Public affairs and campaigns

END BLASPHEMY LAWS CAMPAIGN

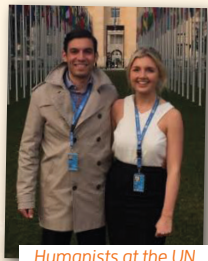
In February we became a founding coalition partner of the End Blasphemy Laws campaign, giving renewed visibility to free speech campaigns from humanist and other organisations globally. We provided operational and lobbying support to the campaign, whose victories so far include blasphemy law repeals in both Iceland and Norway.



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Our delegation to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva spoke out strongly on a range of issues in the past year, in particular highlighting the End Blasphemy Laws campaign; widespread discrimination against women; and the persecution of humanist writers in Bangladesh.

We also railed against the hypocrisy of Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Qatar being members of the Council when all four of those states maintain a death penalty for atheism.



Humanists at the UN

TRACTION ON CAMPAIGN FOR STATUTORY SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

In the run-up to the general election, our campaign for statutory Sex and Relationships Education picked up steam as we encouraged thousands of you to write to your MP candidates about this issue (along with others). We soon received official policy commitments from four of the major parties ahead of the last election: Labour, the Lib Dems, the Greens, and Plaid Cymru. This is a popular issue which receives a lot of media attention and so we'll be looking to build on that same traction in the months to come.

SCHOOL INSPECTIONS

School inspections are an area of concern, particularly around the degree of scrutiny applied to teaching in 'faith' schools. We responded to Ofsted's consultation on a new inspection framework, calling for tighter standards and for Ofsted to assume oversight of RE taught in religious schools.

We also scored some major victories against the inspectorates of some religious private schools which we singled out for concerns about sexism and homophobia. One such inspectorate has since been forced to close.

NEW CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT WOMEN OUTSIDE ABORTION CLINICS: 'BACK OFF'!

Strident anti-choice activists and religious zealots are now using aggressive tactics imported from America to force the closure of abortion clinics by making it unfeasible for women to visit or for staff to do their jobs. And they've had some success... Staff at one NHS hospital have already requested abortion services be withdrawn.

This led us to team up with Mumsnet, Brook, the British Pregnancy Advisory Service and several other high-profile groups to launch the new campaign 'Back Off', which calls for US-style 'buffer zones' around abortion clinics.



“ Having leaflets shoved in my face disregarding a much-thought about decision and being told I'd be 'prayed for' is an invasion of privacy in my view tantamount to harassment. ”

modest restrictions on assembly outside abortion clinics in order to allow women to have an abortion or seek other sexual health services without having to face a daily gauntlet of abuse, as is increasingly becoming the norm in this country.

Thousands of you rallied behind the cause and signed the official Back Off petition online. Our Director of Public Affairs and Campaigns, Pavan, was then among the campaigners who hand-delivered the collected signatures to Number 10.



Delivering the petition to Number 10

We're committed to both women's sexual health and reproductive rights and the right to free expression, so we've looked over these proposals closely. The campaign calls for very

WITCH WARS

After we protested a visit to London by the Nigerian 'witch-finder' Helen Ukpabio, on the basis that she is a distinct threat to child safety in this country, she threatened us with a half-a-billion-pound libel suit for saying she professes to 'exorcise' 'demonic spirits'... when in fact she only exorcises 'black, red, and vampire witchcraft spirits'! We kid you not.

After consulting some *pro bono* lawyers, we struck back on social media and in the press. The Nigerian Nobel laureate and humanist Wole Soyinka, also no fan of Mrs Ukpabio, publicly condemned the latest stunt from the wealthy self-styled 'Lady Apostle'. An enormous Twitter storm soon enveloped the case, and along with some coverage in the national papers, it was widely picked up by incredulous bloggers and even Buzzfeed. We haven't heard from Ukpabio since.



A poster advertising an Ukpabio event

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

In addition to our policy work at the Westminster Parliament and at the UN, we also lobbied Members of the European Parliament continually since last summer's European elections. We encouraged hundreds of you to write to your MEPs about the End Blasphemy Laws campaign. The basis for this is clear: the EU cannot be an effective advocate of human rights globally if its own member states maintain blasphemy laws.

We also mobilised MEPs this year to support a landmark new initiative to combat gender inequality in Europe, successfully overcoming religious conservatives to pass the Noichl Report.

We aim to arrive at a situation where the UK is a secular state guaranteeing human rights, with no privilege or discrimination on grounds of religion or belief

HUMANIST MARRIAGE

The Government finally reported on the consultation about legal humanist marriages in England and Wales at the tail end of 2014. It chose to ignore the overwhelming conclusion of that consultation, which was to legalise humanist marriages, and instead chose to defer the matter by instigating a broader review of marriage law from the Law Commission.

Not prepared to take this lying down, we secured manifesto commitments to legalise humanist marriages from the Labour, Green, and Liberal Democrat parties, and later used the 10th anniversary of legal humanist marriages in Scotland as an occasion to call on the new Lord Chancellor, Michael Gove, to use his order-making powers to legalise humanist marriages in the rest of Great Britain. The Law Commission is now set to report on its initial scoping exercise into marriage law reform by December.



Photo credit: Miki Photography

'FAITH' SCHOOLS

As part of our campaign to end 'faith' schools, we've continued to highlight and oppose the worst of discriminatory religious selection in these institutions, in our own right and through the Fair Admissions Campaign and the Accord Coalition (we are founding members of both).

One significant blow to the unfair status quo came recently when the former Secretary of State for Education, Charles Clarke, along with sociologist Linda Woodhead, published a landmark new report calling for reform across 'faith' schools. This report found many objections to the current status quo of religion in schools, in common with our policies. This included calling for an end to collective worship; a statutory Religious Education curriculum which applies to all schools; and reforming school inspections to ensure all schools contribute to community cohesion.

The schools adjudicator also upheld our longstanding complaint against the London Oratory School. It found the school to breach the Admissions Code in 105 places, including by discriminating both racially and socioeconomically in its admissions. The school then went to great expense to try and overturn this decision through judicial review, with partial success, but a court-mandated re-examination by the

adjudicator in June found once again that the school breached the Code, deeming its selection criteria 'unacceptable'.

We've also prepared an in-depth report into Admissions Code breaches right across the 'faith' schools sector, which we plan to publish later in 2015.

FUNDAMENTALIST SCHOOLS RECEIVING FUNDING THROUGH NURSERIES SCHEME

After we identified 95 private creationist schools and schools suspected of links to extremist groups which were receiving state funds through a scheme to fund school nurseries, we mobilised our members and over 1,000 of you wrote to your MPs and responded to consultations to highlight the issue.

This action was successful. We prompted Government to withdraw the funding and generated a lot of media interest in the story, with our Education Campaigns Officer appearing on several TV and radio programmes and quoted in the national papers in relation to the news.

PARTY CONFERENCES

It was also important to make links with all the major parties ahead of the last election, and so we attended the three main political conferences last summer.

At the Labour Party Conference, we held our annual No Prayer Breakfast with Labour Humanists, which was, as always, very popular. Our Director of Public Affairs and Campaigns spoke on the so-called 'Trojan horse' scandal at the Humanist and Secularist Liberal Democrats' fringe event

at the Liberal Democrats conference, where a number of policy motions relating to our education work were passed by that party's membership, such as opposition to compulsory collective worship in schools and discrimination on the basis of religion in the hiring of teaching staff. We were also highly visible at the Conservative Party Conference where our Chief Executive and Director of Public Affairs and Campaigns arranged informal discussions with MPs and Ministers.

NHS ENGLAND CHAPLAINCY GUIDELINES SAY NON-RELIGIOUS MUST FINALLY RECEIVE APPROPRIATE PASTORAL CARE

We were delighted that, after a decade of campaigning for this, we secured a requirement from NHS England that all its hospitals must provide non-religious pastoral care. The new chaplaincy guidelines mandate equal treatment of religious and non-religious patients for the first time ever.

We intend to work very closely with the NHS to deliver that support through our Humanist Care volunteer pastoral support programme, and will be training more and more volunteers to do just this in sessions held across the country.



HUMANIST CARE

The non-religious pastoral support network

We aim to arrive at a situation where we are respected as an organisation for our expertise and professionalism and recognised as the national voice of Humanism and a leading national voice for the non-religious and for secularism



Isabel Russo

BHA GIVES EVIDENCE TO PARLIAMENTARY BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Our Head of Ceremonies, Isabel Russo, was invited to give evidence to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Death and Bereavement, as a reflection of our expertise in changing attitudes towards death and the increased popularity of non-religious funerals. Isabel was asked to present evidence specifically on the delay

between death and funeral, and our final written report on the issue benefited from the expertise of our entire network of funeral celebrants.



GRAPHIC NOVEL ON EVOLUTION VS CREATIONISM FEATURES BHA STAFF

We were contacted by a graphic novelist, Sean Michael Wilson, and provided him with information about the complex story of creationism in the UK education system. This came shortly after our landmark victory in having creationism taught as science banned from UK state-funded schools, meaning that news was committed to print once again... in cartoon form, as drawn by the legendary artist Hunt Emerson, who is Sean's collaborator.

When we received our copy of the book, *Goodbye God*, we were surprised and delighted to find our Campaigns Manager, Richy Thompson, and our Chief Executive, Andrew Copson, both featured as cartoons within!



A 2015 staff photo

We aim to arrive at a situation where we are an expanding, financially healthy and sustainable organisation with high standards of governance and management

NEW SERVERS

Our ever-vigilant ICT, Database, and Web Manager, Andrew West, has kept us plain sailing this past year with top-notch data protection, robust IT systems, and tougher security controls all-round.

This year we completed a major upgrade of our internal office servers and web servers, ensuring faster and more efficient websites and data transfers.

EXPANDING STAFF TEAM

The BHA is in good health these days and thanks to the support of members we have been able to add capacity in some of the areas where we needed it most. New staff posts include a dedicated Events Manager to run our expanding national events programme; a Groups, Sections, and Membership Coordinator to help develop our local and specialist networks; and a Campaigns Manager, adding some desperately needed scale to our busy public affairs team.

We're still a small charity however and we know that future successes will depend on future growth, and on the continued generosity of our members and supporters.

VOLUNTEERS

We're very lucky that we've been able to rely on a network of over 150 volunteers operating nationally who help out in various ways. Our volunteers are at the heart of our work and without them we couldn't achieve a fraction of what we do. Dedicated volunteers do everything from helping pack envelopes to filming our lectures, providing pastoral support in hospitals and prisons, helping teachers plan lessons around Humanism, designing logos and graphics, and running our sections.

We're incredibly grateful for all that they do and as we continue to grow we hope to be able to call on more dedicated volunteers like these who can support our work.



Head of Operations Catriona McLellan, Chief Executive Andrew Copson, Head of Ceremonies Isabel Russo, and Director of Public Affairs and Campaigns Pavan Dhaliwal

Statement of Financial Activities

including the income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 December 2014

	Funds 2014			Funds 2013
	£ restricted	£ unrestricted	£ total	£ total
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Incoming resources from general funds				
<i>Voluntary income</i>				
Legacies and donations	273,934	976,409	1,250,343	623,382
<i>Investment income</i>				
Rent and service charges	-	6,176	6,176	5,280
Dividends and interest	-	5,213	5,213	5,257
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities</i>	9,505	607,813	617,318	492,980
Total incoming resources	283,439	1,595,611	1,879,050	1,126,899
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Costs of generating income	-	(75,914)	(75,914)	(134,894)
Costs of charitable activities	(276,477)	(1,106,921)	(1,383,398)	(950,849)
Governance costs	-	(11,140)	(11,140)	(7,205)
Total resources expended	(276,477)	(1,193,975)	(1,470,452)	(1,092,948)
Net incoming resources/(Resources Expended) before transfers	6,962	401,636	408,598	33,951

Funds 2014

Funds 2013

£
restricted

£
unrestricted

£
total

£
total

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES*(continued)*

Net incoming resources/(Resources Expended) before transfers	6,962	401,636	408,598	33,951
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	-	3,778	3,778	4,430
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	6,962	405,414	412,376	38,381
Unrealised (losses)/gains on investments	-	1,514	1,514	3,291
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	6,962	406,928	413,890	41,672
Balanced brought forward at 1 January	82,124	453,792	535,916	494,244
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 DECEMBER	89,086	860,720	949,806	535,916

PRINCIPAL STAFF

Chief Executive Andrew Copson
 Director of Public Affairs and Campaigns Pavan Dhaliwal
 Head of Operations Catriona McLellan
 Head of Ceremonies Isabel Russo

BANK

The Co-operative Bank plc
 118-120 Colmore Row
 Birmingham B3 3BA

AUDITORS

Messrs Knox Cropper
 Chartered Accountants
 8/9 Well Court
 London EC3 9DN

HUMANISM

in a nutshell

1. Putting **human beings** and other **living things** at the centre of your moral outlook

2. Seeing the world as a **natural place** and looking to **science** and **reason** to make sense of it

3. Promoting and supporting human **flourishing** across all frontiers, and championing **human rights** for everyone

Contact us

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