

1 June 2016

British Humanist Association
39, Moreland Street
London EC1V 8BB
020 7324 3060
chiefexec@humanism.org.uk

To all members of the British Humanist Association

Dear Member,

British Humanist Association Annual General Meeting
Saturday 9 July 2016 10.30-17.15
Bishopsgate Institute, 230 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 4QH.

These papers contain the agenda for this year's AGM, the formal notice of the AGM, and the minutes of last year's AGM. Please bring them with you to the AGM. Our current Articles of Association and Byelaws will be available on arrival and can be downloaded from the BHA website at www.humanism.org.uk/members.

Registration for the formal AGM will begin at 1pm. Tea and coffee will be available from 13.00, but lunch is not provided.

There will be four forums in the morning, where staff will report to members on recent activities and members will have an opportunity to discuss that work in greater detail than is possible in the AGM proper. We are also pleased to announce that **BHA President Shappi Khorsandi** will address members after the AGM, and the Trustees invite members attending the AGM to stay on for a glass of wine or a soft drink.

So, the full programme for the day will be as follows:

10.30 – 11.05	Ceremonies Forum led by Isabel Russo, Head of Ceremonies
11.10 – 11.45	Public Affairs Forum led by Pavan Dhaliwal, Director of Public Affairs and Policy
11.50 – 12.25	Education Forum led by Luke Donnellan, Head of Education
12.30 – 13.00	Pastoral Support Forum led by Simon O'Donoghue, Head of Pastoral Support
13.00 – 14.00	Break
14.00 – 14.30	Report and Questions with Andrew Copson, Chief Executive
14.30 – 16.00	AGM (registration from 13.00)
16.00 – 16.30	Address by BHA President, Shappi Khorsandi
16.30 – 17.15	Drinks with the Trustees

2015 Report and Accounts

The 2015 Report and Accounts are available online at www.humanism.org.uk/members. A copy is also available for inspection at the BHA office and copies will be available at the AGM. You can request a paper copy in advance of the AGM by emailing, telephoning or writing to us.

In order to make sure that members who have questions concerning the accounts can have them answered without taking up too much time at the AGM, the Board will take written questions on the accounts in advance of the AGM and provide written answers to members attending the meeting. If you have any questions on the accounts, please submit them by email or post by **17.00 on 24 June 2016**.

Resolutions and Motions

As part of the formal business of the AGM, the members will be asked to consider and pass the resolutions which are set out in the notice of the AGM. The resolutions are: to receive the BHA's report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2015; the re-appointment of the auditor; and to authorise the trustees to determine their remuneration.

Any **Emergency Motions** (i.e. motions relating to matters of importance to the BHA that have arisen after the closing date for ordinary resolutions of **3 May 2016** must be submitted to me or to the Chair before the start of the AGM. Emergency Motions may be proposed by Partner groups of the BHA or individual members and must also be seconded. It should be noted that any motions proposed are not resolutions of the BHA in law but only express the opinion of the meeting.

Elections to the Board of Trustees

A postal ballot will not be held this year for Elections to the Board of Trustees because there are five candidates for five vacancies. Voting will be conducted by a show of hands at the AGM. Candidate statements appear on pp. 4-8 of these papers.

We look forward to seeing as many as possible of you at the AGM. **Apologies for absence** can be made by email, post or telephone.

Best wishes,



Andrew Copson
Company Secretary, British Humanist Association
chiefexec@humanism.org.uk

British Humanist Association
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Saturday 9 July 2016, 14.30 (registration from 13.00)
Bishopsgate Institute, 230 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 4QH.

AGENDA

1. Adoption of Standing Orders
which are given in the BHA's Byelaws
2. Apologies for absence
3. Declarations of interest
4. Election of one Timekeeper and two Tellers
5. Minutes of the 2015 AGM
which are attached to this agenda
6. Matters arising from those minutes
which are not covered separately on this agenda
7. Chair's address
8. Elections to the Board of Trustees
which will be by show of hands as there are five candidates for five vacancies
9. Formal part of the Business of the AGM as set out in the attached Notice
10. Emergency Motions
which must relate directly to core areas of BHA's operation or existence, and be related to issues which have newly arisen since 3 May 2016, and must be presented to the Chair or Company Secretary before the start of the meeting
11. Any other business
which must be notified to the Company Secretary in advance of the AGM

Company Secretary
1 June 2016

Candidate Statements for Election to the Board of Trustees

Tom Copley

Why should people vote for you?

I'm a committed Humanist and have the experience and determination to develop the BHA's work and support our staff.

What skills and/or experience do you bring to the governance role?

I've been an elected member of the board for the past three years during an incredible busy time for the BHA in which we hosted the World Humanist Congress. I have developed an in depth knowledge of the organisation and worked with colleagues to help improve the way we work. I've been particularly keen to improve our representativeness, and jointly led a review of the nomination process for election to the board of trustees which has seen the number of women elected to the board more than double since 2013.

As an elected Member of the London Assembly I've spent the past four years scrutinising the Mayor of London, including Chairing the Assembly's Housing Committee. This, combined with my experience as a trustee of two charities (including the BHA), has honed my governance skills – in particular knowing the right questions to ask.

I'm currently the acting Chair of Labour Humanists, and hosted an event at City Hall for the political Humanist groups and the Young Humanists earlier this year. My other roles outside of the BHA include being a trustee of the New Diorama Theatre and a Patron of LGBT Labour.

What is your vision for the BHA?

The BHA has gone from strength to strength over the past three years, and has expanded significantly. I want to see it continue to do so. My particular priorities for the next three years are:

- Succeeding in achieving Humanist marriages in England & Wales. We are tantalisingly close to getting this, with the legislation already in place. Humanist marriage has been hugely successful in Scotland and would massively boost our both our excellent Ceremonies team and our profile as an organisation in England & Wales.
- Stepping up the fight in the courts for assisted dying for the terminally ill and incurably suffering.
- Continuing to highlight unfair admissions policies of faith schools, despite the best efforts of the Government to prevent the BHA from challenging unlawful practises.

In order to achieve the priorities above, and so that we can take on new challenges, I want to ensure we remain in a strong position financially, and develop our fundraising capacity.

Ewan Main

Why should people vote for you?

Because I'm proud of the BHA, and find helping to drive good organisations forward much easier than writing electioneering statements.

What skills and/or experience do you bring to the governance role?

As a BHA-accredited celebrant for the last four years, I have been steeped in one of the key ways in which the BHA brings humanism into the public eye. Ceremonies embody the positive contribution that humanism brings to communities, and reflect the BHA's credibility in training, quality assurance and ethical practice.

I remain fascinated by the ways in which strategic direction, organisational structure and frontline work interrelate. As a manager of the online help services at Carers Trust (another national charity combining service delivery with policy campaigning) I play an active part in line management, job design and salary panels.

I have also been a founder trustee of two York charities, one with many employees and a substantial local authority service contract. And, as a self-employed designer, I work with councils, charities, academic departments and small organisations to communicate their messages to the public.

Finally, on our elected Ceremonies Board for the last three years, I have been deeply involved with this work, not just as a ground-level practitioner but as a strategic-level colleague of the BHA's excellent staff team, frequently grappling with decisions in the best interests of the endeavour as a whole.

What is your vision for the BHA?

I often encounter an assumption that 'humanist' and 'BHA member' mean the same thing. It's seen as analogous to religions, with 'believer' equated with 'member of church'.

But the BHA's role is more important than that.

We have members, but our beneficiaries are, and should be, much wider than our membership. We champion the humanistic view, supporting or inspiring *all* those who might be open to it: the non-religious, the thoughtful, and those seeking meaning in a naturalistic world. Further, by bringing a voice based on tolerance, humanitarianism and shared morality into public discourse, we work to improve the lives of all—not just those who sign our direct debit mandate.

Our campaigns work to make society fairer and kinder; and pastoral support, ceremonies, local groups and outreach work (and, indeed, a choir!) enrich individuals' and communities' lives.

The BHA should do more to embrace the commonality between these elements. Taking our campaigns, networks, groups, celebrants, patrons and chaplains as a unified whole, we can build a national reputation for service provision and thought leadership, in the same way that religious organisations aspire to do—but with the advantage of being modern, relevant, progressive and... correct. (Until proven otherwise.)

David Pollock

Why should people vote for you?

I have long experience in the BHA and deep knowledge of Humanism to which I devote most of my time.

What skills and/or experience do you bring to the governance role?

I have been active in the humanist movement since university and take a special interest in public policy and campaigning, particularly on the place of religion and belief in society in a context of human rights, equality and non-discrimination. I was president of the European Humanist Federation for six years to 2012 and have spoken at EU, European Parliament, Council of Europe and OSCE and other conferences, and have given oral evidence to committees of both the United Kingdom Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, where I currently represent IHEU. I routinely assist the BHA campaigns team as a volunteer, for example with the campaign on humanist marriage (for which I drafted all the proposed amendments to the law) and the judicial review involving the law on religious education. I also have some expertise in charity law. I was given the Distinguished Service to Humanism Award at the 2011 World Humanist Congress in Oslo. My website, with substantial writings on Humanism, is at www.thinkingabouthumanism.org

What is your vision for the BHA?

The BHA is a formidable campaigning organisation. It needs to persist with its campaigns for legal recognition of humanist marriage and for far-reaching reform of the law and practice on religion in schools. It provides high quality non-religious ceremonies and needs to work to increase its 'market share'. The BHA must also succeed with its plans for an extensive pastoral care service for non-religious people, particularly in hospitals, prisons and the armed forces.

To succeed in these campaigns and services it needs to reach out to the large proportion of people who already live effectively humanist lives and persuade more of them to adopt the label 'humanist'. This is no simple task. A key factor will be the extent to which we get Humanism included in school RE syllabuses, which requires provision of high-class teaching materials and promotion of them to schools. Beyond that it will require demonstrating the relevance of humanist thinking to people's everyday social and ethical concerns, broadening the audience we address, and maybe popularising our messages and simplifying our language.

Alom Shaha

Why should people vote for you?

To allow me to continue to support the work of the BHA in my capacity as a board member.

What skills and/or experience do you bring to the governance role?

I am a committed Humanist and author of *The Young Atheist's Handbook*. I work part-time as a Physics teacher at two secondary schools and spend the rest of my time writing, and making science education films. In addition to having served on the BHA board for the past three years, I have been a local councillor in Southwark and also held the position of chair at three organisations in the past - the governing body of Joseph Lancaster Primary School (the school I attended as a child), The Rockingham Estate Play Association, a children's charity providing free adventure playground facilities to local children, and Anando Pat, a supplementary school providing tuition in the Bangla language to children in the Elephant and Castle area.

I have volunteered at a number of other organisations, including the Holy Cross Centre Trust, which works with homeless people in the King's Cross area, and feel that volunteering is an important way for privileged people like me to "give back" to the community. The BHA have been very supportive of my work and I would be honoured to continue to contribute to the organisation as a board member.

What is your vision for the BHA?

I firmly believe that all the things some people think they can find in "God" - love, support, comfort, and meaning - can be found in and from our fellow humans. I am keen to spread the idea of Humanism to individuals and communities who may not have heard of it or considered it appropriate for them and I feel the BHA is the best organisation to work with to achieve this. I want to help the BHA to continue to raise awareness of Humanism and to encourage more people to identify as Humanists. I believe that we can increase membership of the organisation so that it better reflects the true numbers, and diversity, of people out there who share our beliefs and values as Humanists. I also want to see the BHA become a leader in providing pastoral support for the non-religious and to lead the way in ensuring professional and appropriate support for those leaving religion.

Imtiaz Shamz

Why should people vote for you?

Everyone could benefit from more humanism, and humanism could use more of everyone. I'll help make humanism fun, inclusive and ubiquitous.

What skills and/or experience do you bring to the governance role?

I was the youngest governor at NewVic College & Stratford Circus Theatre, working through a large rebranding and repositioning programme. I am the founder of various secret Ex Muslim communities across the world, in cities spanning from London to Brisbane, having steered their security, vetting and "safe space" protocols. This is particularly relevant as the BHA begins to look at more "grassroots" level work, particularly within apostasy and shoring up diversity within its membership.

I am the co-founder of Faith to Faithless, which from its launch last year has been featured in 4 documentaries and across the Guardian, Spectator, Times, and has seen over a million views on YouTube from its videos and documentaries. I am also a moderator for one of the largest apostate forums in the world, with over 11,000 users.

My main profession is starting and running technology start-ups, which has included writing and winning grants (total worth of just under EUR15M), negotiating contracts, building research and funding partnerships (e.g. Universities of South Wales, Oxford, Evora, Stellenbosch), etc. This particular background has made me particularly keen on thinking about problems within a resource-poor environment, as is often the case with charity organisations with big goals.

What is your vision for the BHA?

In 1977 the BHA's aim was "to make humanism available and meaningful to the millions who have no alternative belief." I believe this vision has not changed and is more relevant today than ever before. British society and indeed humanity is growing to become irreligious, and with this global shift humanism becomes vital to give people philosophies, rituals and networks to help replace ancient, culturally rooted religious equivalents.

With my experience in building outreach campaigns and support for apostates, I've seen the need for humanism side-by-side with the growth in apostates. Right now, my organisation Faith to Faithless (F2F) helps apostates in the process of leaving religion and "coming out" to family, however we also need to build humanist frameworks for their future. I would like to see the BHA produce more easy-to-digest YouTube videos about humanism and campaigns at educational establishments to reach out to apostates. The BHA does not need a lot of resources for this: we can output a lot of content with minimal time and financial resources, "flooding" the internet with humanist content that people really do watch, listen to and read. Let's make humanism available, to everyone.

British Humanist Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

held on Saturday 11 July 2015, 14.30 – 16.00 at Bishopsgate Institute 230 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 4QH

Present: Asad Abbas, John Adams, Deborah Ainger, Ray Alcock, Robert Ashby, Christy Avraam, John Bailey, Zeldia Bailey, Christopher Balkwill, Malcolm Barnes, Michelle Beckett, Emma Bell, Damian Belson, Andrew Bennett, Christopher Bornett, Tony Brewer, David Brewin, John Bridge, Nicholas Burns, Ian Bushfield, Natalie Charles, Amal Chaudhuri, Steve Clapman, Donald Clarke, Denis Cobell, Clive Coen, Pamela Cole, Hilary Collins, Les Collins, Bill Cooke, Tom Copley, Clare Delderfield, Stells Desso, Jacqui Dickenson, Steve Dolan, Elizabeth Donnelly, Cedric Duncan, Blaise Egan, Christine Elliott, Mervyn Eyles, Jon Fayle, Vivienne Ford, Alice Fuller, Paul Garrett, Claudia Gian Rossi, Joshua Gladwin, Brian Goredema-Braid, Philip Graham, John Philip Green, James Grindrod, Mary Grove, Bernard Halter, John Hanger, Evan Harris, Ruth Haydock, Roger Heppleston, Nicholas Hollinghurst, Duncan Hutchison, Michael Irwin, Doram Jacoby, Richard Jacques, Mark Janes, Paul Jenkins, Gail Joslin, Paul Kaufman, David Kemsley, Toby Keynes, Audrey King, Matthew Lavagna, Peter Lee, John Leeson, David Leighton, Derek Lennard, Fanny Lines, Alex Lines, Robert Lister, Michael Lloyd, Frederick Lyons, Rosalind Macbeth, Colin MacLennan, John Mangold, Derek Marcus, Joy Marker, Tag McEntegart, Marianne Meinke, Peter Morgan, Brenda Neadley, Tam Neal, Jeannette Nelson, Richard Norman, Rory O'Kelly, Paul Orton, Guy Otten, Paula Palmer, Alan Palmer, Louise Parberry, Michael Parker, Robert Payne, Graham Pendlebury, Rafael Manuel Pepiol, Naomi Phillips, David Pollock, Dave Ramm, Mike Reynolds, John Ricketts, Jeremy Rodell, Sid Rodrigues, Patricia Rogers, Charles Rudd, Martin Sach, Christine Seymour, Alom Shaha, Paula Shaw, David Simmons, Chris Smith, Sam Somerville, Jennifer Somerville, Alison Stein, Richard Stein, Bill Stephenson, Joy Swift, Ian Symons, Anna Tagliaferro, Dick Taverne, Samantha Taylor-Hayward, Caroline Thomas, Ken Thomas, Darrell Thomas, Eric Thompson, Brian Tolman, Jessica Vautier, Terence Waites, Amy Walden, Phil Walder, Ray Ward, Chris Ward, Deborah Waters, Michael Watson, Tammy Webster, Ray White, John White, Lesley Willner, Ralph Windle.

Staff in attendance: Andrew Copson, Pavan Dhaliwal, Steve Emmett, Jay Harman, Jessica Layfield, Catriona McLellan, Blakeley Nixon, Iyabo Ojo, Edward Robinson, Isabel Russo, David Savage, Ian Scott, Richy Thompson, Andrew West, Liam Whitton.

Apologies for Absence: Abe Alpren, William Baker, Hilary Blumer, Barbara Burfoot, Chris Butterworth, Neil Camp, Katy Clark, Kathy Condon, Michael Connarty, Julia Copson, Mike Davies, Graham Downes, Alf Dubs, Roger Farrington, Ian Galletti, Leslie Geach, Anna Gray, John Gregory, Marion Gregory, Megan Grime, Natalie Haynes, Dianne Hayter, Richard Herring, Billy Jenkins, Toby Keynes, William Knight, Warren Lakin, John Landell Mills, Barry Latchford, Robert McFarland, Paul Joseph Meaney, Ben Morris, Diana Naumann, Liz Nelson, Rachel Nicolle, Iain Paterson, Margaret Platts, Mary Porter, Dorothy Quayle, Susan Rankin, Martin Rowson, Carol Smith, Suzannah Stack, Keith Steadman, Kenneth Stuart, Colin Swinburn, Ariadne Tampion, Lewis Wolpert, Jane Wood, David Wright.

Adoption of Standing Orders: On the proposal of Robert Ashby (Chair of the Board of Trustees and the AGM), the Standing Orders were adopted by the meeting.

Declarations of Interest: The Chair reminded those present that members speaking should declare any potential conflict of interest in relation to any item.

Tellers and Timekeeper: No motions having been presented for debate, the Chair dispensed with the appointment of Tellers and a Timekeeper.

Minutes of the AGM of Saturday 19 July 2014: On the proposal of the Board, the minutes were approved *nem. con.*

Matters arising from the previous minutes: There were no matters arising.

Chair's address: The Chair reported on the past year's activities, paying particular attention to the World Humanist Congress, which was an ambitious project that ended up having UK and international impact and a balanced budget. The Chair noted the advancements made this year with regard to BHA events and the development of the staff team, and said that the Board considers community services to be a key plank of the work of the BHA. The launch of Young Humanists bodes well for the future. Looking forward, the Chair noted that the World Humanist Congress theme of freedom of expression is still relevant now. The Chair also noted that 13 years ago there were vacant seats on the Board, and compared that to the 11 candidates who stood this year.

Election to the Board of Trustees: An election of trustees was reported. In a postal ballot in which 2037 valid votes were cast, the following candidates were elected (in order of election): WALDEN, Amy; OTTEN, Guy; EGAN, Blaise. Thanks were expressed by those present to all candidates who stood. Thanks were expressed by the Chair to Mary Porter, Alan Palmer, and Martin Rowson, who were leaving the Board this year.

Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2014: John Adams (Treasurer) presented key figures from the annual accounts. The accounts of 2014 were dominated by the World Humanist Congress, which was the largest ever undertaken and required expenditure equalling one third of the BHA's annual budget. The BHA reported a surplus of £400,000, which represents an exceptional year. The Treasurer reported that the accounts showed unreservedly good news in every category. The report and accounts for 2014 were accepted *nem con.*

Re-appointment of Auditor: Knox Cropper were reappointed as auditor *nem con.*

Remuneration of Auditor: The trustees were authorised to determine the remuneration of the auditor *nem con.*

Special Resolutions: There were no Special Resolutions.

Other Motions: No other motions had been received.

Emergency Motions: No emergency motions had been received.

Any other Business: There was none.

BRITISH HUMANIST ASSOCIATION
(the 'BHA')
Company Number: 228781

Notice of the 2016 Annual General Meeting

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the 2016 Annual General Meeting of the BHA will be held at Bishopsgate Institute on 9 July 2016 at 14.30 to consider and, if deemed fit, to approve the following resolutions:

As Ordinary Resolutions:

1. To receive the BHA's annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2015.
2. To re-appoint Knox Cropper as auditor to the BHA to hold office until the conclusion of the next general meeting of the BHA where accounts are laid before the members.
3. To authorise the trustees to determine the remuneration of the auditor.

Date: 1 June 2016

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

Registered Office:
39 Moreland Street
EC1V 8BB
London



COMPANY SECRETARY

Notes:

1. A member entitled to attend, speak and vote at the meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy, to exercise all or any of his or her rights to attend, speak and vote in his or her place on a show of hands or on a poll provided. Such proxy need not be a member of the BHA.
2. To be valid, the completed and signed form of proxy must be returned to the BHA's registered office no later than 14.30 on 7 July 2016. Lodging a form of proxy does not preclude a member from attending and voting at the meeting.
3. To be eligible to vote, you must be on the register of members of the BHA at 17.00 on 7 July 2016 and have no monies owing to the BHA.

BRITISH HUMANIST ASSOCIATION
(the 'BHA')
Form of Proxy

I, _____ of _____ being a member of the BHA hereby appoint the Chairman of the meeting or _____ of _____ as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf, as indicated below, at the Annual General Meeting of the BHA to be held on 9 July 2016 and at any adjournment thereof.

Resolution	Resolution Summary	For	Against	Discretionary	Vote Withheld
1	Receive annual report and accounts for 31 December 2015				
2	Re-appointment of Knox Cropper as auditor				
3	Authorise the trustees to determine the auditor's remuneration				

Please indicate with an 'X' in the space above how you wish your votes to be cast.

Signed this _____ day of _____ 2016

.....
Signature

Explanatory Notes:

1. Every member has the right to appoint some other person of his or her choice, who need not be a member, as his or her proxy, to exercise all or any of his or her rights, to attend, speak and vote on his or her behalf at the meeting. To appoint a person other than the Chairman please insert the name and address of your chosen proxy in the space provided.
2. To be valid this form of proxy must be signed by the member or his or her attorney and be sent to the BHA's registered office (39 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8BB) no later than 14.30 on 7 July 2016. Any Power of Attorney or any other authority under which the proxy form is signed (or a duly certified copy of such power or authority) must be included with the proxy form.
3. The 'Vote Withheld' box is provided to enable you to abstain on the resolution. However, it should be noted that a vote withheld is not a vote in law and will not be counted in the calculation of the proportion of votes 'for' and 'against' a resolution.
4. If you do not indicate as to how your proxy should vote or you tick the discretion box, your proxy will have discretion to vote on the resolution as they see fit. Your proxy will also have the discretion to vote as they see fit on any other business which may properly come before the meeting, including amendments to the resolution, and at any adjournment of the meeting.
5. The completion and return of this form will not preclude a member from attending the meeting and voting in person.
6. To be eligible to vote, you must be on the register of members of the BHA at 17.00 on 7 July 2016 and have no monies owing to the BHA.