



# IMPACT REPORT 2018

Prepared for the Summer AGM

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# INTRODUCTION

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**FROM ANDREW COPSON**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE, HUMANISTS UK**

Welcome to the 2018 Humanists UK *Impact Report*, our annual report for members to show just how far your subscriptions and donations go towards realising our shared vision of a tolerant society where rational thinking and kindness prevail.

As you'll see, these last 12 months have been an incredibly busy time for all involved in our movement. We are a movement that has the wind in our sails. It was last summer when the British Social Attitudes Survey revealed that 53% of the population of Britain is non-religious, in line with previous surveys that put the number at just over 50%. Following these trends, interest in humanism and our work is growing at a rapid pace, with thousands taking part in our online course on humanism – many encountering humanism for the first time that way – and our membership growing steadily as well.

Our community services and public affairs work also has real momentum, with humanists now operating as pastoral carers in 30% of hospitals, more jurisdictions eyeing up legal humanist marriages, and significant court battles and lobbying victories on the secularist and ethical issues that underlie our agenda for a fairer, more rational society. We hope, in these pages, to give you a glimpse of just some of the impact we are having. We couldn't fit it all in!



# THINK FOR YOURSELF, ACT FOR EVERYONE

## WHO WE ARE

We started out in 1896, and since then we've always been a movement at the forefront of social change.

Today, Humanists UK is backed by over 70,000 members and supporters, as well as over 70 local and special interest humanist groups, who infuse our work with energy, drive, and relentless optimism at every level. Their commitment and generosity allows us to promote free thinking and freedom of choice for everyone.

Our policies are formed with the support of more than 180 of the world's most prominent thinkers and experts, including scientists, philosophers, writers, academics, and public figures. We work 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.



# 2018 IN NUMBERS

*This report is full of information about what we've been up to, but for quick reference, here's a quick snapshot of our impact since last year.*



**20,600 pupils** hearing a humanist school speaker; **88,000 views** on our teaching resources website



**Over 50,000 people** watching a recent Humanists UK lecture in person or on YouTube



**100 hospitals and 15 prisons** now have an official Humanists UK pastoral care representative



**Over 5,000 people in 214 countries** dedicating three hours a week to our online course on humanism



**More than 70,000 people** now signed up as supporters of Humanists UK



**Over one million people** attending a Humanists UK ceremony



**Six major legal cases** covering education reform, assisted dying, marriage law, and abortion rights



**1,000+ media mentions** across newspapers, television, radio, and major online news publishers

# PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING

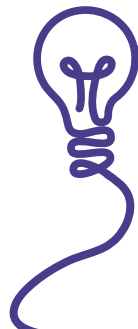
Our work supporting education about humanism has been an enormous success, with Humanists UK school speakers appearing in classrooms all around the UK and thousands more teachers accessing the high-quality resources we make available through our Understanding Humanism website.

One of the big advances in this particular line of our work was the launch of a new online course fronted by our patron Sandi Toksvig (pictured). Entitled 'Introducing humanism: non-religious approaches to life', and published via the online learning platform FutureLearn, the course – which will run several times a year – brings together people all around the world to learn side-by-side as they explore different aspects of humanism and what it means to be a humanist.

The course was a fantastic success, breaking FutureLearn records for its category, with more than 5,000 learners from over 120

countries joining in over six weeks. The course is available at [futurelearn.com/courses/introducing-humanism](https://futurelearn.com/courses/introducing-humanism).

We also published the first two ebooks in a new series of free humanist guides to life's big questions: *Living Well* by Richard Docwra and *Being Good* by humanist philosopher Richard Norman. Both are available to download at [humanists.uk/humanism/the-big-questions](https://humanists.uk/humanism/the-big-questions).



**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**

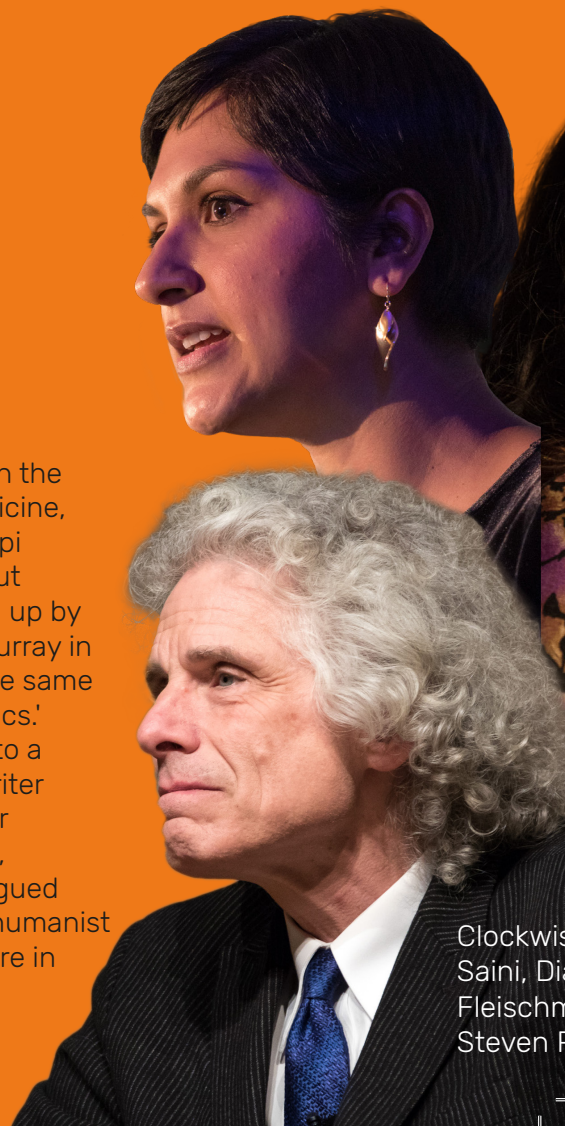


# EVENTS AND LECTURES

## GROWING ANNUAL LECTURE SERIES

Our public lecture series on humanist topics continues to thrive, with 1,000 turning out for this year's Darwin Day Lecture probing 'The evolution of human morality,' with evolutionary psychologist Dr Diana Fleischman, chaired by our Vice President, Professor Jim Al-Khalili. This was followed soon after by an enthralling Rosalind Franklin Lecture, in the week of International Women's Day, where science writer Angela Saini spoke about the ways in which religions have sought to police the sexuality and self-expression of women, to an audience of 400, chaired by broadcaster Samira Ahmed. Writer and surgeon Dr Henry Marsh gave our

biggest ever Voltaire Lecture on the ethical dilemmas faced in medicine, chaired by our President, Shappi Khorsandi. Owen Jones' sell-out Holyoake Lecture was followed up by another from writer Douglas Murray in Manchester last October, on the same title: 'Towards a humanist politics.' And 1,000 people came along to a special one-off lecture from writer and psychologist Steven Pinker on the subject of his new book, 'Enlightenment Now', which argued from statistical evidence that humanist approaches to life and ethics are in fact winning out.



Clockwise from top:  
Angela Saini, Diana  
Fleischman, and  
Steven Pinker



## WALES, NORTHERN IRELAND, AND THE CHANNEL ISLANDS

Wales Humanists and Northern Ireland Humanists are our official sections helping to promote humanism, expand our community services, support our legal work, and lobby devolved governments in Wales and Northern Ireland respectively. They have been busy with public debates, radio appearances, and local events around Wales and Northern Ireland. Community organising in Northern Ireland is going particularly well, with the Secular Brunch concept (moving from town to town in Northern Ireland every Sunday) proving to be a real success. We also had a significant presence at both Pride Cymru and Belfast Pride, and marches in Northern Ireland for both abortion rights and marriage equality.

In February, we also launched a brand new section bringing together our members in Guernsey, Jersey, and the surrounding islets: Channel Islands Humanists. Its official launch event in St Helier in April was heavily featured on Jersey and Guernsey's radio and TV stations, and featured Andrew Copson discussing the future of our campaigns and community work on the islands.

clockwise: Angela  
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# HUMANIST LIVES

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## FUNERAL TRIBUTE ARCHIVE

In April, we announced the launch of the Humanist Funeral Tribute Archive, a pioneering digital collaboration between Humanists UK and the Bishopsgate Institute that lets families immortalise their loved ones by donating their online tribute to a public archive. It's thought that nearly one million people have loved ones whose humanist funeral tributes could enter the archive, which will provide an extremely significant resource for future historians looking at people's lives in the 20th and 21st centuries.



**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**



*Our network of humanists working on the ground now includes 424 humanist celebrants, 172 active school speakers, and 202 non-religious pastoral carers – operating across England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and the Channel Islands.*

## MORE PASTORAL SUPPORT FIRSTS

Humanist pastoral support in prisons and hospitals has grown at an incredible rate in recent years. We now operate in a third of NHS trusts in England and Wales, and 10 members of our Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network now have paid roles in hospital, university, and prison chaplaincy departments. In a series of major firsts this year, our member Lindsay Van Dijk became the first humanist head of pastoral support in an NHS hospital, while our Head of Pastoral Support, Simon O'Donoghue, became national chair of the body which oversees the sector. A sea change is under way.



## GREATER SUPPORT FOR THOSE IN NEED

Our community services work is focused on putting humanism into practice, which also means being there for people in times of great need. Our support network for people leaving coercive religions, Faith to Faithless, has seen a large uptick in activity, delivering safeguarding training to a number of frontline services, including

the London Metropolitan Police, which will help to ensure victims of religious abuse are detected more readily by police officials.

Separately, we commissioned research into how we can better provide 'emergency response' support in the wake of tragedies like the Grenfell Tower disaster. This has produced a roadmap for a new emergency response service for humanists.

# PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND POLICY

## A YEAR WE CAN BE PROUD OF

- MAJOR FAITH SCHOOLS VICTORY
- HUMANIST MARRIAGE REFORMS
- ABORTION SUPREME COURT SUCCESS
- BBC ILLEGAL SCHOOLS REPORT
- MAJOR CAMPAIGN: 'SAVE HAMZA'
- WELSH GOVERNMENT TAKING ACTION
- CHALLENGING PSEUDOSCIENCE
- FREE EXPRESSION AT THE UN
- RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CHANGES
- FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHT TO DIE
- ROOTING OUT HOMOPHOBIA
- CALLING FOR BBC BALANCE
- ANIMAL WELFARE CAMPAIGNS





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

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*This year, we sent legal letters, went to the Supreme Court, lobbied MPs and Lords, collaborated with journalists on exposés, supported whistleblowers, and published hard-hitting new research. We did this as part of our work for free thinking and freedom of choice, so everyone can live in a fair and equal society.*

## **SUPREME COURT ABORTION VICTORY**

Last autumn, we received permission to intervene in the most significant case concerning the human rights of women ever to come before the Supreme Court, concerning the ban on abortion in Northern Ireland in cases of fatal foetal abnormality, rape, and incest. We were the First Interveners in the case, and used our own human rights expertise as well as expert evidence from humanist philosophers Professors AC Grayling, Simon Blackburn, and John Harris to argue for an end to the ban.

The court returned its judgment in June, opining that the ban on abortion in Northern Ireland was, as we argued, a violation of women's human rights, as enshrined in both the domestic Human Rights Act and the European Convention on Human Rights. However, due to a technicality concerning the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission's standing to bring the case, it did not issue a formal declaration of incompatibility. All the same, the result was historic.

This huge court judgment came days after the people of the Republic of Ireland voted to end their own constitutional ban on abortion, which had huge ramifications on the debate in the UK. As it stands, Northern Ireland will become the only part of the UK or the island of Ireland to make legal abortions unavailable.

Before and after the Supreme Court verdict, which sent a powerful message to Westminster, we worked with members of the All Party Parliamentary Humanist Group and other pro-choice charities to support a House of Commons debate on decriminalising abortion in Northern Ireland. (There is currently no Northern Ireland Assembly to act on this pressing issue, and human rights matters – as the court determined this to be – are seen internationally as matters for Westminster.) A majority of MPs now support making abortion legally available in Northern Ireland, but we need the UK Government to allow time for the vote. We'll push on for change.



## WORK FOR LEGAL HUMANIST MARRIAGES

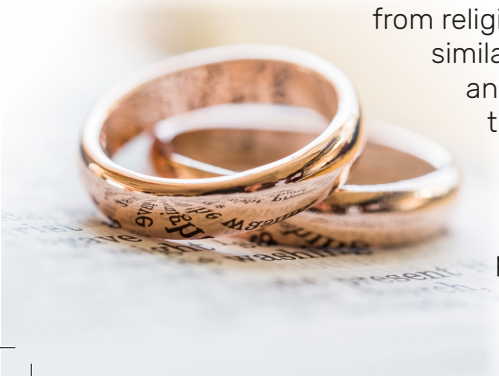
### In the Channel Islands

We had a major success in February when the Bailiwick of Jersey became the latest part of these isles to make humanist marriages legal (following Scotland in 2005 and Ireland in 2012). The new law was approved by the Privy Council in May and could come into effect this year. Our patron, Jersey States Assembly member Louise Doublet, was instrumental in this fantastic success for equality in the British Isles. The nearby island of Guernsey is now considering further reforms to allow humanist marriages as well.

### In England and Wales

We supported the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group to launch a new inquiry into the Government's continued inaction on humanist marriages. As part of this inquiry, the All-Party Group took evidence

from religious groups who have similar provisions in law (Jews and Quakers) as well as the Church of England, the Law Commission, and leading humanist activists from different parts of the British Isles.



The three-month inquiry made its final report in May, which found the UK Government could act to swiftly introduce legal humanist marriages without legislation and without impeding future marriage reforms it might want to make. The Government says it is considering the report's findings.

### In Northern Ireland

Last June, the High Court said our members Laura Lacole and Eunan O'Kane could have Northern Ireland's first legal humanist marriage - which they did - but the Court of Appeal stayed the judgment regarding future marriages. We went to the Court of Appeal in January to argue for upholding the right to legal humanist marriages in Northern Ireland, and we await their judgment.

## ASSISTED DYING

We continued campaigning for a change in the law so people with terminal and incurable illnesses can end their lives with dignity. We continued to work with our members, Omid and Noel Conway legal cases. We were given leave to intervene in Noel's Court of Appeal hearing April. In May, we campaigned for Assembly members in Guernsey to legalise assisted dying on the island, but in the end members voted not to change the law.





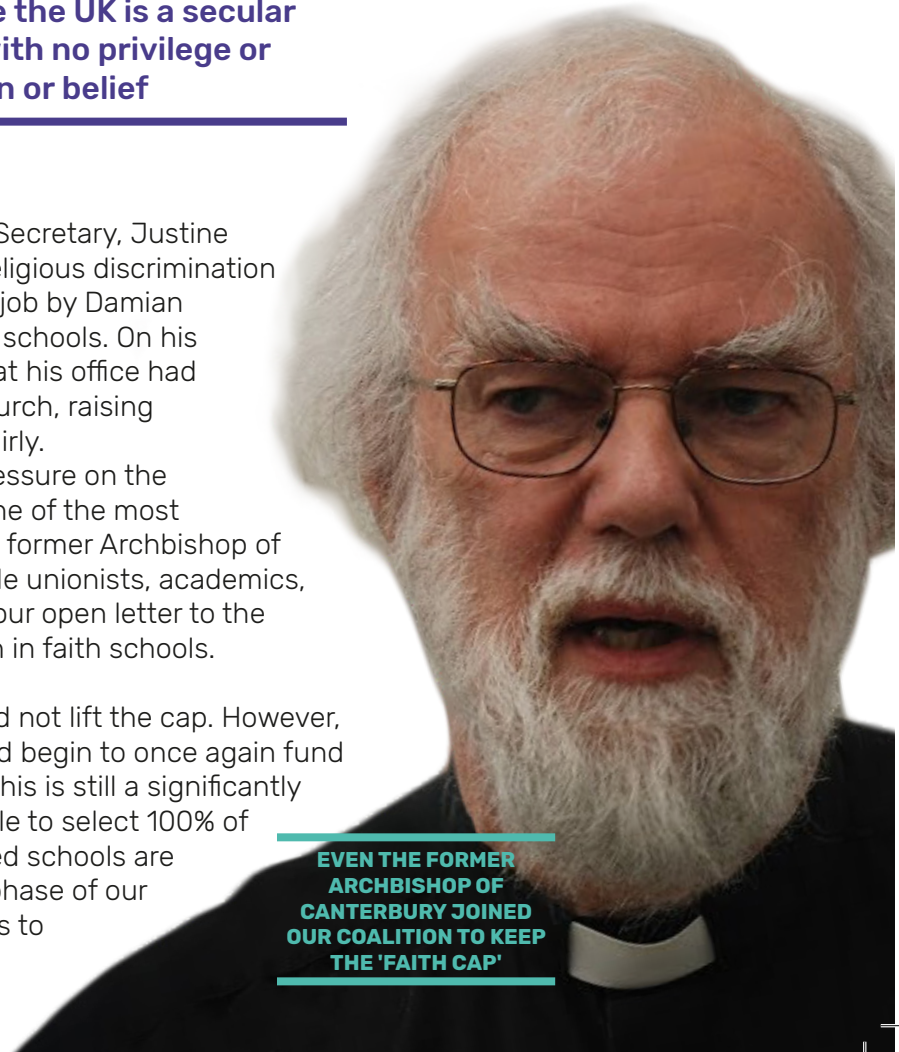
We aim to arrive at a situation where the UK is a secular state guaranteeing human rights, with no privilege or discrimination on grounds of religion or belief

### **VICTORY ON THE 50% 'FAITH CAP'**

In January, after we'd persuaded the Education Secretary, Justine Greening, not to lift the so-called '50% cap' on religious discrimination in English faith schools, she was replaced in the job by Damian Hinds – a past supporter of segregated religious schools. On his appointment, we immediately broke the story that his office had previously taken donations from the Catholic Church, raising questions about his ability to decide this issue fairly.

We stepped up our campaign to try and put pressure on the Government to keep the cap, putting together one of the most diverse campaign coalitions ever seen. In March, former Archbishop of Canterbury joined 70 other religious leaders, trade unionists, academics, education experts, and public figures in signing our open letter to the Government, arguing not to allow 100% selection in faith schools. And it worked.

In May, the UK Government announced it would not lift the cap. However, in a concession to the religious lobbyists, it would begin to once again fund discriminatory 'voluntary aided' schools locally. This is still a significantly better outcome than if free schools had been able to select 100% of places by religion. Applications for voluntary aided schools are amenable to local challenge, meaning the next phase of our campaign will be to support new local campaigns to prevent new faith schools from opening.



**EVEN THE FORMER  
ARCHBISHOP OF  
CANTERBURY JOINED  
OUR COALITION TO KEEP  
THE 'FAITH CAP'**

## WELSH EDUCATION REFORMS

We've had a lot of success in recent months persuading the Welsh Government to introduce new, evidence-based education reforms. Education Secretary Kirsty Williams intervened in our legal battle to see humanists join the council bodies which set local RE syllabuses by telling councils that it is against human rights law to exclude us because we are not a religion. Complementing this is our national work to include humanism in the new RS GCSE and 'Curriculum for Excellence', which is going well.

Separately, the Welsh Government has announced a new, LGBT-inclusive Sexuality and Relationships Education syllabus that will be taught (in an age-appropriate way) to ages 5 and up. This amounts to another major campaigning victory in Wales.

Hundreds of our members also wrote to the Children's Minister, Huw Irranca-Davies, to support plans to make child-smacking illegal in Wales.

## CHALLENGING ILLEGAL SCHOOLS

Our work to challenge fundamentalist religious schools, operating outside the law – denying children a basic education and, in documented cases, using corporal punishment against them – took on a higher profile following the airing of

a prime time exposé we collaborated on with *BBC News*. Government has once again stated its commitment to tackling the issue, and we're working with Ofsted to see that it gives authorities the powers they need to address the issue.

## BBC BALANCE

We were disappointed when the BBC announced in December that it would increase the scale of its religious programming in response to the fact that more people are non-religious. This was not the conclusion promised in an earlier draft of its report. Following this, we've had extensive meetings with the BBC about how they can work to make its coverage fairer and, it's hoped, include more programming on humanism as well.

## PROMOTING STATE SECULARISM

In October, we helped coordinate new calls from peers and MPs in favour of ending the presence of Church of England bishops in our Parliament. We also supported motions at local councils to remove prayers from the formal agendas, and supported moves by the City of London and Belfast City Council to drop prayer from formal ceremonies. We continued to challenge



unlawful job adverts which required people to be of a particular religion, particularly in NHS chaplaincy departments and in state-funded schools. We challenged the presence of homophobic and anti-atheist 'railway preachers' operating with support from state-owned Network Rail. We continued to argue for humanists to be included in the National Remembrance Day Ceremony, which is supposed to be a secular event. We also lobbied Michael Gove on ending religious exemptions to animal welfare laws.

### **'SAVE HAMZA'**

In January, we reported that our member, Hamza bin Walayat, was to be deported to Pakistan because the Home Office asked him incoherent questions about humanism that required him to be able to reel off the names of ancient Greek philosophers. Pakistan is a state where humanists are executed, so we launched a national campaign to save him, attracting 12,500 signatures on a petition to the Home Secretary, plus instigating a coordinated media campaign involving an open letter from over 150 leading British philosophers. We also raised Hamza's case through our interventions at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

We hand-delivered the petition to Downing Street in March and await to see the final outcome of Hamza's appeal of the Home Office's decision. We also used



our petition to call for urgent training for Home Office officials, which we might soon have an opportunity to provide. Additionally, we have helped nearly 20 more humanists so far in 2018 avoid deportation to countries which execute or otherwise persecute the non-religious. Our portfolio of case work in this area is growing.

### **HOMEOPATHY DEFUNDED**

We celebrated a campaign success last November when NHS England announced an end to taxpayer funding for homeopathy prescriptions. This was followed by the end of state homeopathy funding for London's homeopathic hospital in April. A legal challenge from the British Homeopathic Association was then defeated by the NHS in June.

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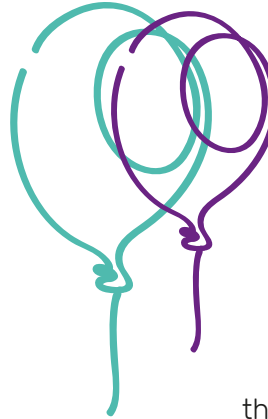
# GROWTH & ESTEEM

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## PRAISE FROM OBAMA AIDE

Michael Wear, an adviser to Barack Obama on engaging with faith communities during his 2012 re-election campaign, praised us in an article comparing the relative successes of humanism in the UK and United States. In his opinion, *'Humanists UK has brought enough people together that its leaders have true political clout'* and *'can speak for tens of thousands of people and carry legitimacy in public conversations.'*

This is a ringing endorsement for our work, and for our position as the UK's leading group campaigning on secularist and humanist issues.



## 70,000 MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

One of the big outcomes of our refreshed look and feel as an organisation has been the increase in the number of people who are joining our organisation or becoming a registered supporter.

In the past 12 months, our membership has grown in the thousands, and our broader supporter base has grown even more steeply – adding close to 10,000 people to our mailing lists. Together we are a growing movement at the forefront of social change.



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**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**

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

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## **HUMANIST STUDENTS**

Last September, we announced free Humanists UK membership to students as part of the relaunch of the Atheist, Humanist, and Secular Students as simply 'Humanist Students'. This brings us closer to our student activists on campuses around the UK, and means we now have over 800 student members across the country.

## **HUMANIST REMEMBRANCE**

We held our second ever state-backed humanist Remembrance Day ceremony in partnership with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) last November, which focused on what remembrance means to humanists. We continue to develop our relationship with the MoD and push for full humanist inclusion at the National Remembrance Day Ceremony in Whitehall.

## **EXPANDING SECTIONS**

As well as the rebirth of our dedicated student section, many of our other community-based sections are going from strength to strength. The London Humanist Choir continues to book significant gigs, including at the Edinburgh Fringe and with patrons of ours like Sara Pascoe. LGBT Humanists has similarly expanded its footprint, and will be taking part in nine Pride events around England, Wales, and Northern Ireland in 2018.



**Humanist  
Students**



## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

INCLUDING THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE  
ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

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	Funds 2017			Funds 2016
	£ restricted	£ unrestricted	£ total	£ total
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>				
Incoming resources from general funds				
Legacies and donations	208,010	802,386	1,010,396	836,992
Other trading activities	-	9,456	9,456	9,266
Investments	-	23,736	23,736	23,882
Incoming resources from charitable activities	-	987,292	987,292	773,189
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>208,010</b>	<b>1,822,870</b>	<b>2,030,880</b>	<b>1,643,329</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>				
Costs of generating income	-	(160,756)	(160,756)	(105,140)
Costs of charitable activities	(236,205)	(1,842,383)	(2,078,588)	(1,736,391)
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>(236,205)</b>	<b>(2,003,139)</b>	<b>(2,239,344)</b>	<b>(1,841,530)</b>
<b>NET INCOMING RESOURCES/(RESOURCES EXPENDED) BEFORE TRANSFERS AND INVESTMENTS</b>	<b>(28,195)</b>	<b>(180,269)</b>	<b>(208,464)</b>	<b>(198,201)</b>

**OUR FULL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR IS AVAILABLE ON THE CHARITY  
COMMISSION WEBSITE AND AT [HUMANISM.ORG.UK/MEMBERS](http://HUMANISM.ORG.UK/MEMBERS)**

	Funds 2017			Funds 2016
	£ restricted	£ unrestricted	£ total	£ total
<b>STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES</b> <i>(continued)</i>				
Net gains/(losses) on investments	-	49,873	49,873	74,214
<b>Net income/(expenditure) for the year</b>	<b>(28,195)</b>	<b>(130,396)</b>	<b>(158,591)</b>	<b>(123,988)</b>
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	<b>(28,195)</b>	<b>(130,396)</b>	<b>(158,591)</b>	<b>(123,988)</b>
Balances brought forward at 1 January	112,372	999,015	1,111,387	1,235,375
<b>BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 DECEMBER</b>	<b>84,177</b>	<b>868,619</b>	<b>952,796</b>	<b>1,111,387</b>

## SENIOR STAFF

**Chief Executive** Andrew Copson  
**Director of Public Affairs and Policy** Richy Thompson  
**Director of Community Services** Teddy Prout  
**Director of Operations** Catriona McLellan  
**Director of Communications** Al Ghaff  
**Director of IT** Andrew West

## BOARD OFFICERS

**Chair** Tamar Ghosh  
**Vice Chair** Naomi Phillips  
**Treasurer** John Adams

**Auditors** Knox Cropper  
**Bank** The Co-Operative

Humanists UK is the operating name of the British Humanist Association, a registered charity (no. 285987) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (no. 228781)



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# **THINK FOR YOURSELF, ACT FOR EVERYONE**

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