

British Humanist Association, operating as:



ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 December 2021

Company Number: 00228781

Charity Number: 285987

Humanists UK

Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2021

The Directors present their annual report along with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2021 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

Legal and Administrative Details

Status	The British Humanist Association (Humanists UK) originated as the Union of Ethical Societies in 1896, was incorporated as the Ethical Union in 1928 and became the British Humanist Association in 1967. Its working name became Humanists UK in 2017. It is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 14 March 1928. Its governing instrument is its Articles of Association, adopted on 23 July 2011.			
	Company number:	00228781	Charity number:	285987
Registered office	39 Moreland Street, London, EC1V 8BB			
Honorary officers	Chair:		Tamar Ghosh	
	Vice Chair:		Ann O’Connell	
	Treasurer:		John Adams	
Other Directors	Tom Copley (to 13 July 2021)		David Pollock (to 10 November 2021)	
	Blaise Egan (to 24 June 2021)		Sophy Robinson (from 27 June 2021)	
	Iain Deboys		Jeremy Rodell	

	Ruth Kaufman	Imtiaz Shams
	Ewan Main	Emma Shepherd
	Neil McKain	Hamza bin Walayat
	Stephanie Niven	Amy Walden (to 24 June 2021)
President	Professor Alice Roberts	
Principal staff	Chief Executive:	Andrew Copson
	Director of Public Affairs & Policy:	Richy Thompson
	Director of Communications & Development:	Liam Whitton
	Director of Community Services:	Edward Prout (to 31 August 2021)
	Director of IT:	Andrew West
	Director of Operations:	Catriona McLellan
	Director of Understanding Humanism:	Luke Donnellan
	Director of Ceremonies:	Deborah Hooper (from 25 January 2021)
	Head of Humanist Care:	Clare Elcombe Webber (from 12 April 2021)
		Jessica Grace (to 16 February 2021)
	Head of People	Vicky Jones (from 6 September 2021)
Auditors	Knox Cropper LLP, Chartered Accountants 65 Leadenhall Street, London, EC3A 2AD	
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank plc 118-120 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 3BA	
Investment Managers	Barclays Wealth 23 Lower Brook Street, Ipswich, IP14 1AQ	

	<p>Flagstone Investment Management, 1st Floor, Clareville House, 26-27 Oxendon Street, London, SW1Y 4EL</p> <p>BNY Mellon Fund Managers Ltd, PO Box 336, Darlington, DL1 9RF</p>
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Mission

By advancing the humanist approach to life, we inspire and support non-religious people to be happy, confident, and ethical, and we work with them for a better society.

Charitable Objects

Humanist UK's Objects are: 'The advancement of Humanism, namely a non-religious ethical life stance, the essential elements of which are a commitment to human wellbeing and a reliance on reason, experience and a naturalistic view of the world; the advancement of education and in particular the study of and the dissemination of knowledge about Humanism and about the arts and science as they relate to Humanism; the promotion of equality and non-discrimination and the protection of human rights as defined in international instruments to which the United Kingdom is party, in each case in particular as relates to religion and belief; the promotion of understanding between people holding religious and non-religious beliefs so as to advance harmonious cooperation in society.'

Structure, Governance and Management

Organisational structure

The Trustees meet regularly during the year and at the beginning of each meeting they are requested to declare any conflicts of interest. These are detailed in notes 18 and 23 of the financial statements.

The Trustees review their performance and skills annually and new trustees are recruited to meet any needs or gaps identified.

The day to day management of the Association is delegated to its key management personnel as detailed in note 9 to the financial statements. Remuneration of the Chief Executive is set by the Trustees. Remuneration of other key management personnel is delegated to the Chief Executive.

Method used to recruit and appoint new Trustees

Trustees are recruited by election or by appointment, as set out in the Byelaws. Co-options until the next election can be made to fill vacancies arising among the elected trustees.

Induction and training of new trustees

New trustees are provided with a Trustee Handbook which contains information about their role and responsibilities as recommended by the Charity Commission. This includes: the trustee role description and personal specification relevant to the role, the Association's confidentiality policy and the eligibility requirements for becoming a trustee, and a Code of Conduct. They are also supplied with a copy of the Articles of Association. Induction meetings covering the background to current matters take place with the Vice-Chair, the Chief Executive and key members of the staff team. Training on matters relevant to the role and responsibilities of trustees is encouraged and the Board subscribes to literature pertinent to good governance.

Public benefit

The trustees have satisfied themselves that Humanist UK's activities are compliant with law and guidance for charities on public benefit. The trustees (who are also Directors of the company for the purpose of company law) confirm that when deciding on the activities of the charity they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

The five principal areas of work (which overlap and reinforce each other) are:

- Education of the public about Humanism, providing a moral framework for those who do not accept any religion. We seek to ensure that everyone has access to information about humanist approaches to ethical issues and about the humanist tradition. We deliver this education through our website, public lectures, and teaching materials for use in schools, and in many other ways;
- The provision of non-religious or humanist celebrants, so helping to meet a growing demand from a larger section of the public than we can currently assist for baby-naming, marriage and (especially) funeral ceremonies that accord with their own beliefs. Our aim is that all those who want a humanist ceremony should have access to one. The activity (like the other four principal areas of work) represents a net cost to the Association but we are hopeful that it will in due course cover its costs;
- The provision of humanist pastoral care to the non-religious in settings where religious people have the support of chaplains, for example in prisons and healthcare;
- Seeking to protect the human rights of humanists and other non-religious people and to combat the discrimination and disadvantages they encounter. We do this by working for compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998, especially insofar as it forbids discrimination by public authorities on grounds of religion or belief, and by making representations to Government and others, including sometimes addressing the need for changes in the law, and by promoting a secular state.

- Supporting local humanist groups and the positive contribution of humanists to building a peaceful, plural society.

While the principal beneficiaries of the Association's work are humanists and other people who have non-religious beliefs, the trustees consider that the whole public benefits from our promotion of human rights and non-discrimination and from the wide range of information and educational material we offer. Our website is available to all and (sometimes subject to a small admission fee) so are our lectures.

Report on progress towards our Five Outcomes

2021 saw the Board of Trustees agree a new Humanists UK strategy, drawn from a deep analysis of our external environment, strengths and weaknesses, polling data, and a mapping exercise of all the varied work we are already doing on many fronts to create a better society. Our new strategy has reconceptualised the ways in which we promote awareness of humanism; the ways we support people to lead happier lives; and has helped us to create a framework which has helped us focus resources on campaigns based on an appraisal of their social importance and their potential for success.

We report on our work across the year below under the aims of our new strategy, whose overall mission statement reads,

‘By advancing the humanist approach to life, we inspire and support non-religious people to be happy, confident, and ethical, and we work with them for a better society’.

1. More people knowing what humanism is and more non-religious people with humanist beliefs and values recognising themselves as humanists

Our work to promote people knowing what humanism is continued across formal educational settings, public events, books, and online content. As it was the year of our 125th anniversary, one of the major goals of our education work was also to research the rich history of humanism in the UK through our project, Humanist Heritage. We published the results on our own websites and in online encyclopaedias and publicised it using social media.

Humanist Heritage

We debuted our new *Humanist Heritage* website ahead of a special 125th Humanists UK anniversary event on 30 April, compiling dozens of biographies and articles covering the people, places, movements, objects, and stories of the humanist movement in Britain. The event featured video messages of support from the leaders of Labour, the Lib Dems, the SNP, and the Green Party of England and Wales, as well as a letter from a minister from the Department for Housing, Communities, and Local Government, all congratulating us on our proud history of social action and campaigning achievement. The online event itself, viewed live by 650 people, was entitled *Conscience in action: how humanist activists shaped society*, acted as an introduction to the new *Humanist Heritage* resource, and featured contributions on our history from project coordinator Madeleine Goodall, Chief Executive Andrew Copson, longtime activist David Pollock, and abortion law reform campaigner Diane Munday. We held a companion event at the tail end of the year, on *Education not indoctrination: 125 years advancing children's rights*, focusing on our longstanding work for balanced teaching about religion and belief in schools.

Our Humanist Heritage Coordinator went on the road, at least virtually, to promote engagement with *Humanist Heritage* through a series of specialist talks around the UK. Audiences included our own branches and partner groups (in Colchester, Sheffield, Liverpool, Chester, Chichester, Brighton, the Isle of Wight, South West London, North Yorkshire, Reading, and Farnham), Humanists UK sections such as LGBT Humanists, our

training-oriented Humanists Professionals Conference, as well as the Vernon Lee Society, the National Association of Teachers of RE, National Secular Society, the Ministry of Justice, the London Knowledge Quarter, and others. These were all deeply fertile meetings which often produced new findings, including obscure records from local collections, such as those of the 'Ipswich Heretics'. Our extensive research on Northern Ireland was unveiled at our *Five Years of Northern Ireland Humanists* anniversary event, which featured humanist activity starting in Belfast in 1896.. Our annual Holyoake Lecture, which featured Dr Laura Schwartz lecturing on Victorian 'Infidel feminism,' also tied in with our heritage theme. A promotional article on the 'forgotten founders' of the humanist movement was published in the *New Humanist*. We also placed a display advertisement in the *Guardian*.

We also developed a series of detailed walking tours with the app GoJauntly. The first of these explored the deep humanist histories in Bloomsbury and Manchester. We also encouraged supporters and affiliated humanist groups to use the interactive map on the *Humanist Heritage* website to design their own tours. The fledgling and increasingly international Humanists of Wikipedia group brought together digital historians for edit-a-thon sessions covering the history of the birth control movement, and saw sustained engagement with both Wikimedia UK and the British Library.

The *Humanist Heritage* website itself saw significant use (40,000 page hits from 14,000 users), with the majority of its traffic coming directly from Google search queries. As well as profiling important known figures from humanist history, its content also shines a light on figures whose humanism is less widely reported (such as our former President, later Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald; the scientist Albert Einstein; and codebreaker Alan Turing). It also features biographies of groups and figures, mainly women, whose significant achievements have gone unreported, such as our first President, suffragist Elizabeth Swann; war correspondent Florence Dixie; educationist Julia Huxley; and our inaugural Secretary, the feminist writer Zona Vallance. The work has fallen not only to staff but also to a core group of writing, research, and proofreading volunteers. The website has already proven itself popular with academic historians, with several volunteering as contributors to the site. It has also brought about deeper links with the University of Gothenburg and Queen Mary University, London, with whom we agreed to co-organise an international conference on humanist heritage in 2022. The website also serves as the basis for a new suite of resources for schools on humanist history.

Events and videos

One of the ways we continued to advance understanding of humanism was through our public events, with recorded lectures and other videos on YouTube drawing 617,000 views (736,000 in 2020).

Our best-attended events continued to be our annual lecture and medals series. Our Darwin Day Lecture saw 3,100 people hear from medallist Dr Oliver Scott Curry on 'Morality explained: the new science of right and wrong', chaired by our President, Professor Alice Roberts. Our Rosalind Franklin Medallist was Oxford/Astrazeneca vaccine developer Professor Sarah Gilbert, who spoke to an audience of 1,800 on 'Racing against the virus', chaired by Samira Ahmed. Our Voltaire Medallist was Professor Nichola Raihani, who drew 1,350 people to her lecture on 'The social instinct', chaired by Alice Roberts. And our Holyoake Lecture, which is normally given in

Manchester on political thought, saw 500 people tune in to medallist Dr Laura Schwartz discuss 'Infidel feminism', chaired by our Chief Executive. For the first time, we also organised our Annual Convention as an online event, which saw 620 households buy tickets for talks from author Sathnam Sanghera; astrophysicists Dr Stephen Smartt and Liv Boeree; our President, Professor Alice Roberts; our Vice President, Professor Jim Al-Khalili; and historians of the humanist movement Professor Callum Brown, Professor David Nash, and Dr Charlie Lynch.

The shift in focus from physical events to online events, necessitated by public health guidelines, presented the opportunity to invest in a greater number of accessible online events outside our named annual lectures. These included events on freedom of religion or belief, with a panel of experts; on the science behind vaccines; on the nature of war, with Professor AC Grayling; on mental health and humanism, from our Young Humanists section; on our 125th anniversary and Humanist Heritage (see above); and on humanist attitudes to the climate crisis, among other topics. We also developed a new format of *In Conversation With...* online events, featuring our Chief Executive in unscripted conversations with activists, authors, and experts on varied topics of interest to them.

Social media and website

We continued to enjoy a substantial social media presence, which we used to promote our news and activities and as a channel for advancing awareness of humanism to a (mainly) non-religious audience. We saw consistent growth across social media channels. Our two largest channels were our Facebook page, which ended the year with 235,000 followers (231,000 in 2020), and our Twitter account, where we grew to 109,000 followers (101,000 in 2020). Our tweets made over 55.5 million impressions (33.7 million in 2020) and our primary Facebook page saw 9.7 million engage with our content (5.4 million in 2020).

We continued to make greater use of video content across the year, including through our October social media campaign, 'That's Humanism!', a reprise of our 2014 social media campaign of the same name. The campaign featured newly animated videos narrated by our patron Stephen Fry on humanist approaches to topics such as 'What should we think of death?', 'What makes something right or wrong?' and 'How should I be happy?' The new campaign videos were viewed a quarter of a million times over the fortnight, and the campaign brought 25,000 direct hits to the campaign landing page, which directed onward traffic to our 'How humanist are you?' educational quiz. Our social media channels were also the main vehicles for a variety of short information campaigns promoting humanist views and priorities. These included a campaign around filling in the census (reaching 12 million people online) and messaging around humanist attitudes to vaccinations, encouraging vaccine uptake.

18,500 people took the 'How humanist are you?' quiz on the Humanists UK website (same as 2020), which we've found to be one of our simplest and most effective tools for introducing people to humanism as the name given to a set of attitudes towards existential and moral questions. Over 9,400 people visited the page on our website on humanism (8,900 in 2020). As part of our new strategy, we will be developing a range of additional pages to further understanding of humanism for a substantially rewritten and revamped Humanists UK website launching in 2022.

For Dying Matters Awareness Week, we produced a new area of the website covering humanist attitudes towards death, entitled 'My mortality'. It featured 50 blogs from humanist celebrants, pastoral carers, and school speakers reflecting on dying. These received 1,400 views.

Podcast

Our *What I Believe* podcast series continued to interview famous humanists about their personal beliefs, values, and convictions, accruing 105,000 downloads from 100 countries (58,000 downloads in 2020). It aired a third and fourth series, featuring guests such as Jim Al-Khalili, Polly Toynbee and Richard Dawkins. As in 2020, the podcast continued to list in the top 1% of podcasts globally.

Understanding Humanism

School closures owing to the coronavirus pandemic continued into 2021, affecting the number of school visits our accredited school speakers were able to make. However, these visits rose gradually over the year as schools reopened in different parts of the UK. In total we spoke to 19,381 pupils (up from 18,800 in 2020, but down from 42,000 pre-pandemic in 2019), including 'remote visits' using teleconferencing. Teachers gave our school speakers an average overall rating of 4.9 out of 5 (4.8/5 in 2020).

High demand for our *Understanding Humanism* website was maintained, with 153,000 page views (150,000 in 2020), nearly 36,000 resource downloads (34,219 in 2020), and 12,100 video views (12,300 in 2020). Behind the scenes, work continued towards the launch of a redesigned *Understanding Humanism* website in 2022, and we recruited an Education Development Manager to assist us with the creation of even more resources for schools.

We also saw 150,250 page views (57,000 in 2020) on *Assemblies for All*, our site compiling assembly resources from leading charities and resource providers to support teachers to put on high-quality, inclusive assemblies on universal themes as an alternative to collective worship. The uptick in usage reflects the widespread return of in-person school assemblies, and represents nearly tenfold growth compared with 2019. Growth was organic, with 90% of traffic coming from Google (up from 70% in 2020).

We were also consulted on a number of new BBC Bitesize education resources about humanist ethics and community for publication in 2022, and on a new book for younger primary school children on living in a humanist family.

Teacher training

Buoyed by the success of our online teacher training in 2020, we expanded our offer of continued professional development (CPD) for teachers. We trained 330 teachers (274 in 2020) through our paid-for training model, which is helping us to improve the reach of the programme as a whole. We received an average rating from teachers over the year of 4.7 out of 5 (4.7/5 in 2020).

Training sessions were organised with National Association of Teachers of RE's *Strictly RE* conference, the University of Winchester, the Cumbria Standing Advisory Council on RE, Edge Hill University, the University of Reading, Leeds Trinity University, Sheffield

Hallam University, St Albans RE Teachers Together, Queen's University Belfast, Stranmillis University, Coleraine College, and the Council for Integrated Education Northern Ireland.

Courses

We also continued to offer our free online courses, *Introducing Humanism* and *Humanist Lives*, through the Open University FutureLearn platform, through an on-demand model which allows course-takers to go through the weekly course at their own pace at any time of year. The more philosophical and introductory *Introducing Humanism* course, presented by our patron Sandi Toksvig, was taken by 1,130, while the more practical and people-oriented *Humanist Lives* course, fronted by Professor Alice Roberts, was taken by 570. On average, users rated these courses 4.5/5 and 4.6/5, respectively.

SACREs and SACs

We continued to help local authorities to improve teaching about humanism in schools by supporting humanist representatives on Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education in England and Standing Advisory Councils on Religion, Values, and Ethics in Wales (known as SACREs in England and SACs in Wales). We ended the year with 126 appointed humanist representatives (94 in 2020) leaving 48 SACREs/SACs without a humanist representative.

We had particular success with improving humanist representation on SACs in Wales as a result of the introduction of its new Religion, Values, and Ethics curriculum, with representatives on 17 out of 22 Welsh SACs (up dramatically from 7 in 2019). Elsewhere, we supported reps in the South and East of England to form local support networks, and commissioned research into how inclusive locally agreed syllabuses were of humanism and non-religious worldviews. The review found significant progress had been made towards including humanism, but few curriculums acknowledged that teaching about humanism was a legal requirement (as shown by the *Fox* case in England in 2015, and explicitly stated by the Welsh Curriculum and Assessment Act 2021).

Books about humanism

Another way we promoted humanism was through promoting sales of two books: *The Little Book of Humanism* and, from September, *The Little Book of Humanist Weddings*, both co-authored by our Chief Executive Andrew Copson and President Alice Roberts. *The Little Book of Humanist Weddings* debuted in September as a follow-up to 2020's *Sunday Times*-bestselling *Little Book of Humanism*. It was written with help from Zena Birch and our network of accredited humanist celebrants to create the ultimate collection of humanist reflections on love, romance, relationships, difficulties, and getting married. *The Little Book of Humanism* saw 7,500 sales (17,600 in 2020) while *Humanist Weddings* sold 1,150 copies, with both books being common display items across major booksellers. All author royalties were donated to Humanists UK.

Separately, we published a book on humanist responses to emotional issues encountered by our volunteers delivering care in the community. In support of our pastoral care work, Jo Mutlow's book *Being There: Humanist responses in pastoral care* was sent to lead chaplains of 969 hospitals, 122 prisons, and 224 hospices, and sold over 300 additional copies through the Humanists UK website. We also partnered with

education publisher Routledge on a new undergraduate textbook on humanism, with significant contributions being made by humanist philosopher Richard Norman, our Chief Executive, and our Director of Understanding Humanism. We were also consulted on the Key Stage 1 resource *Belonging and Believing: My Humanist Family* by Gill Vaisey, part of a series of textbooks exploring different worldviews.

Dialogue

We continued to expand understanding of humanism among religious people through our dialogue programme. Our network of trained dialogue volunteers grew to 109 representatives (70 in 2020). Dialogue activities took many shapes and forms. These included a formal dialogue session between our section Young Humanists and Urban Muslimz; through a series of events around the theme of the book *Religion and Atheism: Beyond the Divide*, bringing together humanist philosophers and Anglican theologians; through a series of Catholic/humanist dialogue sessions; with the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum; by speaking at a Religions For Peace event on human rights; as part of the 'interfaith service' for London Climate Action Week; through the 'Lifting the Lid' online conference on funerals; at the Faith & Belief Forum 'Interfaith Fun Run'; in various forms around Inter Faith Week; with the Durham Interfaith Group; at St. Mary's University; as part of a Religion Media Centre panel discussion in Plymouth; through further panel discussions in Sheffield, Kirklees, and Canterbury; and by making numerous appearances on Voice of Islam radio, where our Dialogue Officer spoke on the humanist commitment to challenging anti-Muslim prejudice and hate.

2. More non-religious people living happier, more confident, and more ethical lives

The pandemic continued to have a marked impact on our numbers of ceremonies, pastoral support visits, and the peer support we offer for 'apostates' through our Faith to Faithless programme.

Our network of trained and accredited humanist celebrants, Humanist Ceremonies, has yet to see a full return to pre-pandemic levels of activity in England and Wales, owing to changed plans around lockdowns and continuing pressures on the funeral industry. In all we conducted 7,522 funerals (8,029 in 2020), 1,554 weddings (345 in 2020), and 310 namings (93 in 2020). Numbers were up significantly in Northern Ireland however, where our celebrants provide legal marriages. Northern Ireland celebrants conducted 575 weddings (up from 171 in 2020), 255 funerals (up from 131) and 30 namings (up from 2). Our network grew to 563 celebrants (519 in 2020), partly owing to larger growth in Northern Ireland. We continued to promote our ceremonies to non-religious people through paid print and online advertising. We also put increased emphasis on vow renewal ceremonies and pre-planned funeral ceremonies, with social media campaigns promoting conversations around these topics.

Things were also not yet back to normal for our Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network (NRPSN), whose members continued to struggle to resume their placements providing emotional support in many hospitals, hospices, and prisons. Their services were particularly affected in that they are more likely to be volunteers in comparison with religious chaplains, who are usually paid. With funding from the AB Charitable Trust, we employed a prison project coordinator to address the relatively greater barriers we have faced providing support in the prison sector. Outside of these areas, we also fed into a

Ministry of Defence scoping project around NRPSN supporting members of the Armed Forces. The network remained stable at 240 trained and accredited members.

Our apostate support programme, Faith to Faithless, delivered three safeguarding training webinars for 29 professionals whose roles all involved contact with apostates, including officials from the Ministry of Justice, British Transport Police, and a Local Authority Children's Social Care team. It also organised seven socials attended by over 60 apostate service users. In addition a new online service, peer support groups facilitated by specially trained pastoral carers, launched in June. These groups met virtually 13 times with 24 apostates attending regularly. In August, we organised the Apostasy Conference 2021, a major conference bringing together 16 expert speakers and an audience of 112 apostates, policymakers, and service providers, exploring in particular how systems and institutions shape the experiences of apostates. The programme also produced content for its YouTube channel, such as talking heads videos featuring apostates. We increased our investment in this programme of work with the recruitment of a full-time Apostate Support Service Manager. This has also seen us reorganise as a service provided by Faith to Faithless the asylum support to humanists at risk previously provided by our policy team. As part of this work, we gave online evidence at first tribunal hearings on asylum cases and supported over 33 ongoing cases from countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.

Local organisers in Humanists UK partner groups and branches largely resumed in-person meetings and activities over the course of the year, usually alongside a programme of online gatherings and events. By year's end, we had five fully integrated Humanists UK branches (as in 2020), and were supporting another 47 affiliated partner groups (50 in 2020).

We also continued to support a number of special interest sections and networks. Humanist Climate Action's online launch event in May was attended by over 500 people and saw our President, Alice Roberts, joined by environmental campaigners Dr Anjana Khatwa, Professor Ben Garrod, Professor Sarah Bridle, and Mark Lynas for a discussion of the humanist aspects of climate change activism, creating a platform for humanist climate activists. It organised several events, including rallies at COP26 in Glasgow and London. Defence Humanists once again organised a film to mark Remembrance Day on 11 November. LGBT Humanists organised a number of well-attended events, including a Trans Day of Remembrance, and an event on the history of LGBT Humanists (coinciding with the 125th anniversary of Humanists UK), and supported the premiere of the biofilm *Hating Peter Tatchell*, about our patron. Young Humanists had a significant regular events programme, with events on vaccines, fake news, and dialogue with Muslims as part of its varied programme. The London Humanist Choir continued to meet, online and in-person, to record and perform music.

3. More people enjoying greater freedom of thought, of expression, and of choice over their own lives

Our campaigning aims

One of the biggest changes under our new 2025 strategy relates to our outward-facing campaigning and public policy work. What had been two aims under the old strategy became just one, outlining a broad mandate to improve human rights and equality for everyone, not just humanists, particularly in relation to the key humanist priorities of freedom of thought, expression, and choice.

What we seek as an organisation is for 'everyone to have the fullest possible freedom of choice in the shaping of their own lives, limited only by the rights and freedoms of others in a fair and equitable society and never by the pressures of religion, tradition, or outmoded law. This includes children, who should be actively prepared in schools for a life in society in which they can exercise this freedom and should, while still children, enjoy their human rights with increasing fullness in line with their growing maturity.' Our full strategy spells out our aspiration to 'influence public opinion, public policy, legislation, and case law to defend and advance: freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief; freedom of expression; and freedom of choice to the extent compatible with the rights and freedoms of others in a fair and equitable society.'

This refined basis for our policy work was accompanied by a much more targeted approach to how we expend our resources on active campaigns. As well as entailing a review of our policies, it also introduced a system for choosing which issues from our broad policy platform to prioritise over the strategic period. We have chosen six: legal recognition of humanist marriage across the UK and crown dependencies; to reduce the proportion of religious schools in the UK and of children subject to religious selection for school places; broad and balanced approaches to religion and worldviews in schools; legal assisted dying across the UK; abolition of the blasphemy law in Northern Ireland; and increased UK Government support for persecuted humanists abroad. These campaigns enjoy the benefit of a greater share of our resources and staff time as they are areas where the humanist voice has the biggest contribution to make and where our campaigning will have the biggest impact on socially important issues.

An adjunct to these six campaigns is our new concept of the 'watching brief'. This means maintaining our current status as policy experts across the full range of our selected policy issues which materially affect the lives of the non-religious, or the public at large, about which humanists for various reasons are especially concerned, and being ready to leap into action when needed in support of our goals. This reactive campaigning is a very busy plank of our public affairs and policy work. We remain alive to the knowledge that we may need to reorganise our campaigns in line with changing circumstances, such as fulfilling a campaign's aims, or a shift in the external environment.

This new approach became our working practice later in the year, with most work in 2021 conducted under our old approach. Below, we set out the breadth of that work, both proactive and reactive, organised by theme.

Freedom of thought

Freedom of thought is a foundational requirement of a free society, and advocacy of this fundamental right by humanists goes back many centuries in this country and in others. Our public policy platform endorses the idea of the secular state as the best means to achieve freedom, fairness, equal citizenship, and peace in a plural and cohesive society. We maintain that only by maintaining a fair separation between public institutions and institutions of religion or belief (including those of humanism) can the state fully respect and promote freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief for all citizens, up to the limits of the rights and freedoms of others in a fair society.

Accurate representation of the non-religious: Census Campaign

In March we launched a campaign in the run-up to the decennial census urging non-religious people to tick 'no religion' (England and Wales) or 'none' (Northern Ireland) in the national census, rather than a religious box that reflects their ethnic background, educational history, or other cultural affiliation. This is because the Census in England and Wales uses a leading question, 'What is your religion?', and in Northern Ireland, 'What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?' rather than the neutral question such as 'Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion? If so, which?' preferred by most pollsters. This leads to a significant undercounting of the non-religious in our national statistics. Over-inflated religious affiliation figures are often used to justify wholly disproportionate levels of public funding of religious groups in education settings and in healthcare, and generally to sideline the non-religious from consideration on questions of public policy.

Our campaign included a web portal, extensive social media advertising, video content, online events, press work, blogs covering various angles on why the census religion question matters, publicity from our patrons, local group mobilisation, and YouGov polling. We saw wide coverage across local and national TV, radio, and print. We estimate that between 8 and 12 million people viewed our online materials. In contrast to our 2011 campaign, which used extensive leafleting and billboard advertising, 2021's was digitally focused in light of the ongoing lockdown and changed media trends. A digital analysis showed that our tweets had wider reach than other census campaigns on the environment and sex/gender.

Balanced approaches to religions and worldviews: curriculums

One of the key planks for our campaigning for balanced approaches to religion and worldviews is our work promoting the inclusion of humanism in Religious Education curriculums. In England, we responded to Department for Education (DfE) guidance on RE lessons during the pandemic recovery period, which did not make clear that humanism should be taught on an equal footing with religious perspectives. We said we were minded to bring a judicial review against the guidance on the basis it was not 'objective, critical, and pluralistic', prompting them to make revisions. Separately, we met Ofsted officials following their research review in May of religious education, which concluded that high-quality RE must include teaching about a 'range of religious and non-religious ways of living'. Officials clarified that a curriculum that excludes humanism would not be 'cumulatively sufficient' in Ofsted's view.

In Wales, we worked to support the passage of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act, which replaced RE with 'Religion, Values, and Ethics' (RVE) lessons that are fully inclusive of humanism, with humanists explicitly permitted to join Standing Advisory Councils (SACs) and Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs), the council bodies that advise on local RE and set the syllabus. After the law was passed, we engaged extensively with the Welsh Government over the wording of guidance.

As reported under our first aim, the Welsh reform led to big improvements in our representation on SACs, with representatives placed on 17 out of 22 Welsh SACs (up dramatically from 7 in 2019). Where our representatives were refused placement on SACREs in England, we pursued legal remedies, underpinned by clear case law on the teaching of humanism in RE lessons. Local humanists we worked with sent pre-action

letters to Southampton Council, West Sussex Council, and Kent Council. This was covered in the *i* newspaper and on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme.

Balanced approaches to religions and worldviews: 'collective worship'

Another dimension of our campaign for a balanced approach to religions and worldviews in schools relates to the legal requirement for daily acts of 'broadly Christian' collective worship in schools, which we seek to end. This law is unpopular (many schools flout it) and the alternative allowed for in law provides only for a daily act of worship of a religious character that is not exclusively Christian, such as worship of another religion or 'multi-faith' worship. In the absence of inclusive assemblies, children from non-Christian families risk stigmatisation, and in any case are typically left with no educationally worthwhile or meaningful alternative activities, should their parents or guardians opt them out of religious assemblies.

In England, we pursued change through a backbench bill brought by All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group (APPHG) Vice Chair Lorely Burt, the Education (Assemblies) Bill, which we worked with her to table and supported by lobbying. The Bill seeks to provide a meaningful alternative to worship for children who have been withdrawn: inclusive assemblies. The Bill received widespread media coverage, some of which was very misleading, but despite some pushback from the minister, it passed its third reading in the Lords uncontested. It had its first reading in the Commons, introduced by APPHG Co-Chair Crispin Blunt MP, in December.

In Wales, we initially pursued a possible amendment to the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill with help from supportive Members of the Senedd, but later decided against this strategy as the Welsh Government was whipping its MSs to vote down all backbench amendments. We met the Office of the Children's Commissioner on the matter, emphasising the clear recommendation from the United Nations that Wales repeal 'collective worship' laws. We shifted to building support in the Senedd for renewed action following the Welsh elections, and raised the issue again in evidence to the Senedd's Children, Young People, and Education Committee, which was consulting on its priorities for the new Senedd term. We also met the new Welsh Minister for Education, Jeremy Miles.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

We want all children to receive a full, factual, and age-appropriate education on sex and relationships to keep them happy, healthy, and safe. In Wales, where the subject is called Relationships and Sexuality Education, we supported the passage of new law for this with the Curriculum and Assessments (Wales) Act, and participated in the Welsh Government's RSE working group, helping draw up the RSE Code and statutory guidance for the new curriculum.

We raised concerns about the draft code's unanticipated, and rather large, faith-based carve-outs, which could have led to faith-based indoctrination of pupils, as well as radically undermining the intentions of the new Act. The statutory code had other glaring problems, too, such as making zero mention of LGBT people. We wrote to the Welsh Education Minister and lobbied Welsh Government officials on these matters and, as a result, the version of the code and guidance published in January 2022 explicitly says the subject must be taught in 'a neutral, factual way' and the code refers to 'including LGBTQ+ lives'.

We also worked with parents and journalists to bring public scrutiny to inappropriate RE and RSE resources around the country, so as to stimulate reforms. One, an inappropriate video resource called *The Good Samaritan*, was being used as a resource to teach RE to seven year olds despite violent and sexist imagery. Another saga involved a highly misogynistic Catholic RSE resource called *A Fertile Heart*, which was featured as an exclusive in the *i* in January and subsequently received wide media attention nationally, including from the BBC and a range of national newspapers. We also worked with local councillors, as well as MPs Jess Phillips and Stella Creasy, on the issue, with Phillips tabling parliamentary questions. Although they were initially unwilling to respond to our concerns, we lodged an official complaint with the DfE, Welsh Government, and Ofsted, because the resource was being used by all the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Cardiff which oversees schools both in Wales and in the English border regions. Our complaints led to Herefordshire Council issuing a statement condemning it. The Archdiocese however doubled down, saying it 'authentically reflects Catholic teaching'. The episode informed the passage of the Curriculum Bill in Wales, where MSs defeated an amendment that would have permitted such resources to remain in use. A snap Ofsted inspection led to one high school agreeing to 'change the language' used in the resource because of 'concerns about how the roles and responsibilities of men and women within relationships were described.' In June, after five months of campaigning by us, the English Minister for Schools Nick Gibb MP changed tack and said that the Government had 'serious concerns' about *A Fertile Heart*, that it was likely not be compliant with statutory guidance, and that he would communicate this directly to the Archdiocese of Cardiff.

Religious state schools

Without doubt the most serious remaining area of religious privilege in our overwhelmingly secular society is the built-in bias in the law in favour of religious schools. This persists despite their unpopularity with the public, shown in repeated polls, and their need for specific exemptions from various aspects of equality and human rights law. Nor are these privileges entirely a matter of outdated laws: many are embodied in relatively recent deals that successive governments have done with the churches, especially the Church of England which has openly acknowledged the importance of its schools to its future fortunes.

Our aspiration is for every state-funded school to be open to pupils and families of every religion or belief, and to teach a broad and balanced curriculum with an inclusive, non-sectarian school ethos. One dimension of this work means challenging the process of green-lighting new faith schools, which all have a discriminatory ethos and the majority of which have discriminatory admissions policies. We supported groups of parents and councillors in areas across the UK on decisions to approve new faith schools where there was little local demand for them.

This was the case in Kingston upon Thames, where a statutory consultation was missed, and an erroneous decision was made to allow the Southwark Diocesan School Board to run its own consultation and report back to the council. Despite a strong local campaign, council leaders made a frank statement that due to funding rules which favour the creation of new faith schools, local people faced the choice between a new faith school or no new school, leading many councillors to vote reluctantly to approve the school. We also supported residents in a new residential area which had a religiously selective Catholic school approved despite clear local opposition at consultation stage;

Peterborough Council said that the decision could not be overturned, and the local Catholic Church described the residents as 'anti-Catholic'. This statement was retracted after the residents complained and the row was covered in Catholic news outlet, the *Tablet*. We also supported the launch of a grassroots campaign for inclusive schools in the North West called Fair Schools for Oldham. A final proposal for a Hindu school in Redbridge was rejected.

We had coverage in the education press in May following the release of an updated School Admissions Code, which retained provisions allowing faith schools to prioritise children from faith backgrounds over children who are or were in care but do not share the faith. In August we published our hard-hitting report *Careless or Uncaring? How faith schools turn away pupils who are or were in care*, the first research to look at this issue in depth. Through analysis of admissions policies, we found that 76% of Catholic secondaries and 100% of Jewish secondaries discriminate against children who were previously in care, compared with 1% of Church of England schools and 0% of other Christian, Hindu, or Sikh schools. Separately, several faith schools were found in breach of the School Admissions Code by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator following our complaints about unlawful admissions policies.

We provided a witness statement in a non-religious family's efforts to judicially review Somerset County Council's decision to move from a three-tiered education system (i.e. one that includes primary, middle, and secondary schools) to a two-tiered system (one that includes just primary and secondary schools) which involved amalgamating a middle school of no religious character into a Church of England primary school. This meant the proportion of faith-based places in the area would move from 75% to 100%, infringing their freedom of religion or belief. However, despite acknowledging that the change will disadvantage non-religious families, the Court upheld the decision. This overriding presumption in favour of faith schools remains extremely common, despite the wording of Government guidance having changed in recent years to make it clear that provision should meet the needs of the local community and denominational provision should be balanced accordingly.

We were disappointed when, in November, the States of Guernsey rejected a proposal to outlaw discrimination against teachers by religion in religious schools following a threat by the Catholic Church to close the schools it runs in the Bailiwick if made to comply with the law. (It previously made threats to pull out of legal marriages over same-sex marriage, but in the end never did so, and of course, many Catholic schools across Europe are already subject to similar laws.)

Unregistered (illegal) schools

Another facet of our work relates to unregistered (illegal) religious schools, which typically practise corporal punishment, do not comply with teacher training or health and safety requirements, and teach a curriculum composed entirely or almost entirely of rote scripture learning, often without even covering basics like maths or English. We met the DfE's unregistered schools team, Ofsted's team, and the Hackney Council safeguarding lead (since the highest concentration of such schools is in Hackney) to discuss advancing new legislation to shut them down. This was an issue we brought to public attention originally several years ago, with slow but steady progress since.

As well as working directly with government and public officials, we worked with MPs, peers, and parliamentary bodies on the issue. We briefed peers at several points in the year in relation to parliamentary debates on loopholes to home education laws which make it difficult to identify or shut down illegal schools (they allege they are merely providing supplementary education for home-educated pupils). We also fed into the Education Select Committee's inquiry on the matter. We supported peers who put pressure on the Government to commit to a register of home education in order to root out illegal schools. Similar calls were then made by the final report on child protection in religious organisations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, which recommended the Government 'change the definition of full-time education, and to bring any setting that is the pupil's primary place of education within the scope of the definition of a registered educational setting' and equip Ofsted with further powers to take action on illegal schools. Both of these recommendations are in line with our policy.

We also worked with whistleblowers and the media to make sure that politicians did not lose sight of the real human consequences of delay or deliberate inaction. In February, we revealed that illegal Charedi Jewish schools (yeshivas) in Hackney had been continuing to operate at capacity during the lockdown, using a loophole in the coronavirus legislation allowing children to attend school and out of school settings on the basis of being 'vulnerable'. This was supposedly because they were unable to use IT equipment at home and so, it was argued, could not be educated there. Since the Charedi community doesn't permit the use of IT equipment, all the pupils attending unregistered yeshivas fit the definition, even if the fact they couldn't be taught at home also demonstrates the claim that they are home-educated the rest of the time is patently false. In a separate investigative story, *Schools Week* highlighted in May how government inaction led to issues we flagged to the Charity Commission more than five years ago had not been acted on, namely that eight settings that the DfE suspects of operating illegally are also still operating as charities.

Public services: Broadcasting reform

Our policy calls for the BBC to give equal treatment to broadcasting about, by, and for humanists, on par with the funding, airtime, and due consideration it gives to religious groups. We responded to Ofcom's Public Service Media consultation in March to share our concerns about the BBC's failure to represent the non-religious throughout its programming despite its legal and charter obligations to do so. In April, we met Ofcom to discuss this further, and then separately met the BBC Commissioning Editor, whom we supplied with a list of humanist programme ideas and content.

We continued to advocate for the BBC to drop its longstanding ban on humanists and other non-religious people participating in its Radio 2 programme *Pause for Thought* and Radio 4's *Thought for the Day*, covering moral reflections, which are still reserved for religious people only. However, in Northern Ireland, BBC Radio Ulster invited our celebrants Sheena Bradley and Janni Knox to be regular humanist contributors to its *Thought for the Day*, marking a major advance. Humanists continued to feature as part of regional *Thought for the Day* slots across England, too, notably in Bristol, where our partner group is a regular contributor.

Public services: Support for 'apostates'

Our work in support of so-called 'apostates' leaving controlling religions brought to light

issues that engaged our public affairs team. We publicised a pioneering global study of the worldwide experiences of apostates, which found that they are more likely to experience assaults than any other group of non-religious people, that ex-Muslim apostates are significantly more likely to be physically and psychologically victimised than ex-Christian apostates, and that the perpetrators are almost exclusively close family members, which means that victims are unlikely to report the abuse to the police. The research was carried out by Young Humanists International committee member and our former Humanist Students President, Hari Parekh. Hari was also one of the speakers at our 2021 Apostasy Conference, which brought together a range of experts to discuss apostates' lived experiences and the barriers they face accessing support.

We welcomed new draft statutory guidance following the passing of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 on recognising and preventing domestic abuse. This guidance included a section specifically on spiritual abuse and honour-based violence which we had previously called for. We were disappointed not to see apostates named as a group that is particularly vulnerable to abuse, alongside others, despite the clear beneficial impact of doing so.

Right to asylum

We continued to support humanist asylum seekers, particularly from 13 countries where humanists face the death penalty and others where persecution of humanists is an acute problem, and we reflected this experience in continued engagement with the Home Office in relation to proposed immigration and asylum reforms.

We criticised the Home Office's proposed New Plan for Immigration as imposing unfair and undue barriers upon those seeking asylum in the UK after fleeing persecution in their countries of origin, including humanists who face the death penalty under blasphemy and apostasy laws, and for other changes which will disproportionately negatively affect non-religious asylum claimants who are systematically missing from consideration in international refugee regimes and from the UK's country-based guidance on persecution. We later expressed concerns about the Nationality and Borders Bill in response to an inquiry by the Joint Committee on Human Rights. The Bill's proposal to introduce a temporary protection order runs counter to the UK's obligations under the Refugee Convention 1951 and undermines the principle of non-refoulement, which will make the asylum process harder for the cohort of non-religious refugees that we have supported. We also responded to a call for evidence from the Women and Equalities Select Committee into equality and the UK asylum process, highlighting structural inequalities in the way that the Home Office interviews, assesses, and determines non-religious cases.

Freedom of choice

Freedom of choice is a cross-cutting priority in our policy work, intersecting closely with our work for greater freedom of thought and expression. It frequently underpins our request for equitable treatment for humanism and humanists in law, as with our campaign for legal recognition of humanist marriages. Freedom of choice also underpins our longstanding demands for equality and universal access to justice, and our commitments to human rights as a paramount legal and social endeavour. It is also embodied by the continued presence of racial justice, women's rights, children's rights, and LGBT rights as prominent themes in our public advocacy.

Legal recognition of humanist marriages

We want humanist couples across the UK to be able to marry in a legally binding ceremony with an accredited Humanists UK celebrant, just as religious couples can with a trained minister of religion, without having to take on the extra expense and barrier of a second ceremony in a register office. Couples can have legally recognised humanist marriages in this way in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Jersey, and Guernsey, but not in England, Wales, or the Isle of Man. The law in Guernsey, which we campaigned for, came into force mid-year, with the first humanist marriage happening in the summer.

As relates to England and Wales, we explored the possibility of advancing a technical appeal against the 2020 High Court judgement on humanist marriages (which agreed with all our arguments and none of the Government's, except that it stopped short of issuing a formal declaration of incompatibility, which the judge felt was unjustified given the Government's preference for avoiding 'piecemeal' reforms). The Government nevertheless embarked on a number of such piecemeal reforms this year, including new regulations to allow civil and religious marriages to take place outdoors, which attracted several urgent and written questions in both houses of Parliament on the way this undermines the objection to humanist marriages. We also engaged with the Law Commission's review on marriage law. Later in 2021, we employed a full-time Humanist Marriage Campaigner, reflecting increased resourcing for this campaign under our 2025 strategy.

We saw significant engagement from MPs and peers in every party on this issue, including from dozens of politicians at both the Conservative and Labour party conferences. Our members and particularly our celebrants wrote numerous times throughout the year to their MPs about the issue, many of whom asked parliamentary questions on their behalf. We supported the launch of a new All-Party Parliamentary Group on Weddings, chaired by Siobhan Baillie MP, with whom we worked on plans for a joint event with the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group (to which we act as secretariat). The Shadow Justice Secretary and Shadow Marriage Minister reaffirmed to us Labour's firm support for humanist marriages. The Welsh Government also voiced its strong support for our desired reforms and wrote to the UK Government to ask them to bring about immediate legal recognition of humanist marriages (as marriage law is not devolved in Wales).

Elsewhere on this front, our Director of Public Affairs and Policy spoke at an event of the freedom of religion or belief-focused group Freedom Declared about the discriminatory treatment of humanist weddings under pandemic restrictions. We also addressed ongoing issues in Wales and Northern Ireland around private venue limitations, getting the problems resolved with officials in both cases.

Assisted dying

Another area where freedom of choice is lacking inspires our campaign for a compassionate assisted dying law. We want those with incurable or terminal conditions to have access to assistance to end their suffering subject to safeguards requiring a fixed, uncoerced, and genuine wish to do so made in sound mind. We frequently work closely with the Assisted Dying Coalition, which we previously helped to establish, and whose members share our policy. These organisations include My Death, My Decision (with whom we share a staff member), Humanist Society Scotland, Friends at the End (Scotland), End of Life Choices Jersey, and End of Life Ireland.

In February, our patron, the paralysed assisted dying campaigner Paul Lamb, wrote in the *British Medical Journal* criticising the Court of Appeal's ruling in his case, and to implore the Justice Secretary to launch an inquiry into assisted dying. In April, we released news that our patron, the acclaimed neurosurgeon Dr Henry Marsh, had terminal cancer and was making a plea for a public inquiry on the issue. This attracted blanket media coverage in the papers, radio, and television, as well as some American magazines such as the *Atlantic*, and was syndicated by the Press Association in 177 papers. Subsequently, the then-Health Secretary Matt Hancock MP confirmed he had written to the Office of National Statistics to ask for the data on people with terminal illnesses who had ended their lives.

In June, we were saddened by the deaths of two members who had prominently campaigned for the right to die through the courts: Noel Conway and Paul Lamb. We handled the media around Paul's death, and expressed our sadness over the circumstances of his death and his aspirations for a better law across TV, radio, and print media, including across 251 syndicated stories via the Press Association.

In July, the British Medical Association voted 149 to 145 to end its 15-year opposition to the right to die, endorsing a definition of assisted dying aligned with our policy position. Our Chief Executive and our patron Henry Marsh were both quoted extensively in the media in relation to the news. That same month, we published research outlining the global picture on assisted dying, showing an increasing global consensus in developed democracies in favour of allowing it.

Later in the year, Baroness Meacher won a second reading of her Assisted Dying Bill in the House of Lords, and we joined Dignity in Dying (whose policy is narrower than ours) and our fellow members of the Assisted Dying Coalition to rally in support of the Bill outside Parliament, where Henry Marsh and our Chief Executive gave speeches to the crowd on the humanist commitment to freedom of choice and the right to die. 14 humanist peers spoke in the debate, and the Bill ultimately passed its second reading.

In Jersey, we submitted evidence as part of the Citizens' Jury on Assisted Dying. We were delighted to see our evidence reflected in the Jury's recommendations to the States Assembly, in line with our policy, after 78% of jurors voted to support the proposal. After a majority of Jersey representatives in the States Assembly voted to approve the proposal by 36 to 10, the island will now progress to consulting on legislation, potentially lining up Jersey to become the first British territory to legalise the right to die. Jersey Deputy Louise Doublet publicly thanked Humanists UK and Channel Islands Humanists in the chamber for our work on the issue.

Children's rights

Also in March, we celebrated the news that the Scottish Parliament had passed a Bill to fully incorporate the UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots law. However, the constitutionality of the Act was successfully challenged by the UK Government on the basis that it exceeded limits on Scotland's devolved powers.

During the passage of the Welsh Curriculum Act in March, the Senedd voted in favour of an amendment placing a duty on schools to promote knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, further

strengthening the rights-based approach to education in Wales. Later that month, we responded to a consultation on the new Children's Rights Scheme – guidance designed to enable ministers and officials to pay due regard to children's rights in their policy-making. Although we very much agree with the rationale for the guidance, our response highlighted the fact that it does not require ministers and officials to pay due regard to the Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which would, amongst other things, mean that they would have to take steps to remove the requirement for schools to conduct collective worship and to fully incorporate the UNCRC into law.

In February, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child issued its List of Issues Prior to Reporting (LOIPR), a document designed to press the governments of the UK on the progress they have made towards compliance with the UNCRC. The list included a request for each government to 'describe the measures taken to repeal legal provisions for compulsory attendance at collective worship in publicly funded schools and ensure that children can independently exercise the right to withdraw from religious observance at school.' This follows on from our getting the same matter raised in the English, Welsh, and Northern Ireland civil society reports. This suggests that the lack of action in this area from all the governments in the UK will feature in the next set of Concluding Observations.

LGBT rights

The rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans (LGBT) people continued to be a recurring theme for us, in policy work and in public advocacy. Much of our education work on Relationships and Sex Education and discrimination against teachers in schools touched on the need for LGBT-inclusive subject content and policies, and we spoke out regularly against homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic hatred and discrimination through our social media channels.

We were one of the earliest organisations in the UK, if not the earliest, to call for an end to so-called 'conversion therapy' (a fraudulent, pseudoscientific 'therapy' that amounts to torture of LGBT people according to the false premise that it can change their sexuality or gender identity). Our volunteer-led section, LGBT Humanists, has been advocating a ban on the practice since at least the 1990s. Since 2018, we and LGBT Humanists have been doing what we can to hold successive administrations to the promise made by Theresa May's Government that there will be a full legislative ban across medical, non-medical, and religious settings.

In May, the UK Government announced that it would bring forward legislation to ban the practice in England within the year following a public consultation. APPHG members Angela Eagle and Crispin Blunt condemned comments made by the Prime Minister that the ban would contain a loophole allowing these practices to still occur when it could be said to be 'appropriate pastoral support (including prayer) in churches and other religious settings in the exploration of [an adult's] sexual orientation or gender identity.' We strongly spoke out about this on our social channels and in the media. In June, the Welsh Government committed to bringing forward legislation to ban conversion therapy.

In October, the Government launched its consultation on restricting conversion therapy, but its proposals fell far short of the full ban needed to prevent harm. In its proposed form, the ban would not adequately protect against conversion therapy in religious

settings, where the majority of such practices occur. We sent out a guide to respond to the consultation to LGBT Humanists members, as well as a large number of Humanists UK members and supporters, to help them contribute to the public consultation as individuals.

We also spoke out about conversion therapy using our platform at the 47th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, where at our invitation we made a joint statement with the (religious) Ozanne Foundation to assembled states.

Abortion rights

Women's freedom of choice, extending to their right to autonomy over their bodies and to make choices about their own sexual and reproductive health, continued as an important ongoing area for reactive campaigning work. In February, we called on both the UK and Welsh Governments to make permanent the pandemic-related regulations that allowed women to take at home the first as well as the second of the two pills needed to bring about early medical terminations of pregnancy, in line with evidence that showed this had dramatically improved abortion access for vulnerable women.

Our Channel Islands Humanists section, working with Jersey Deputy Louise Doublet, lobbied in support of ultimately successful legislation to abolish the requirement for a seven-day wait between medical consultation and access to abortion services. In Gibraltar, where we and the Gibraltar Secular Humanists supported the 'Yes' proposal in a referendum on abortion, Gibraltarians voted by 62% to approve decriminalisation. This referendum came about as a result of the UK Supreme Court ruling in 2018 regarding Northern Ireland, where we acted as First Interveners, and which established incompatibility between Northern Ireland's ban on abortion (and therefore Gibraltar's too) and the European Convention on Human Rights.

Access to justice

One of our busiest areas of reactive work came in response to UK Government plans, developed and widely leaked and speculated about over the course of the year, to reform the 1998 Human Rights Act and access to judicial review. We continued building a coalition of charities, trade unions, human rights bodies, and religion or belief groups, who signed up to our joint statement supporting the existing Human Rights Act as a proportionate and effective guarantor of individual freedoms and access to justice. This coalition grew to over 230 members, making it the largest ever coalition of its kind in the UK.

In March, the Independent Review of Administrative Law (IRAL) published its recommendations cautioning against radical reform of the judicial review process. In response, the Government dismissed the IRAL recommendations and chose to consult a second time on the reforms the Independent Review had rejected. These proposals include making some Government decisions immune from judicial oversight and scrutiny altogether. In response, we criticised proposals that would severely curtail judicial review and carve out important areas of decision-making from judicial scrutiny, which we said had 'alarming implications for the rule of law' and risked irrevocable damage to access to justice. The Government has nevertheless ignored widespread criticisms and pressed ahead with its subsequent Judicial Review and Courts Bill.

We defended the Human Rights Act in our response to the Government's consultation on their Independent Human Rights Act Review, praising the Act's contribution to a 'general culture of respect and support for rights among public authorities' and dealing with a multitude of technical points. We also responded to a call for evidence on the subject from the Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR), highlighting the importance of the Act as a signature piece of legislation that enables ordinary citizens to hold the Government to account and the ways in which the Act supports the rights of humanists specifically, as it did when remedying the exclusion of humanism from the school curriculum (in 2015) and on humanist marriage (in Scotland in 2015 and Northern Ireland in 2017). We stated that without the Act, fundamental freedoms could be placed in jeopardy and UK citizens could become less able to enforce their rights. The JCHR's report to the Review reflected many of our points.

In June we coordinated a joint letter to the Prime Minister calling for the protection of the Human Rights Act, with Amnesty International UK, Rene Cassin – the Jewish voice for human rights, and Quakers in Britain. It was also signed by Humanist Society Scotland, the Bishop of Manchester, British Muslims for Secular Democracy, the Network of Sikh Organisations, Soka Gakkai International, the Movement for Reform Judaism, Liberal Judaism, the Quakers in Britain, the Church of Scotland, the Bishop of St Davids, and many more.

In December, the Government finally confirmed its proposed changes to the operation of the Human Rights Act, and we reacted by writing to our coalition members and our members about the far-reaching consequences these would have for humanists, who depend upon the courts having the power to interpret legislation in line with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) to establish equality of treatment with religious groups across a range of legislation including access to healthcare, marriage, and education. We also briefed members of the APPHG and voiced our concerns directly to the Justice Secretary, and to his Labour and Liberal Democrat counterparts.

Equality and non-discrimination laws

Channel Islands Humanists engaged with the legislative process of a new Discrimination Ordinance in Guernsey, which in line with our recommendations was updated to provide equal protection for the non-religious in law – a breakthrough. We were however disappointed that a proposal to end discrimination against teachers on grounds of religion was dropped after protests by the Catholic Church.

Public services: Pastoral care and chaplaincy

Finally under this heading, our policy team also worked to bolster the right of patients, workers, and visitors in hospitals, as well as prisoners, members of the armed forces, and students, lecturers, and teachers, to non-religious pastoral support through public institutions. One aspect of this work was routine monitoring of all adverts for pastoral support and chaplaincy positions in the NHS and prison service to guard against all-too-common, unlawful, religious discrimination practices. We also worked with the NHS on the drafting of new chaplaincy and pastoral care guidelines, and fed into a new Ministry of Defence review of its pastoral support provision for the non-religious. We celebrated a first in the hospital sector when our Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network (NRPSN) chair Lindsay van Dijk became head of the chaplaincy and pastoral care team at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, which is the most senior paid role held by a humanist pastoral carer in the NHS to date.

Freedom of expression

Free expression is a frequent cross-cutting theme in our policy work, much of which can also be thought of or categorised as issues of freedom of thought and/or freedom of choice. Our policy work and campaigning here is increasingly focused on challenging both formal and *de facto* proscriptions on blasphemy and 'causing offence' in law, which history shows to have a significantly corrosive effect on both the quality of public discourse and on individuals' and communities' ability to shape their own lives and stake out an equitable role in society. This is true in the UK but also abroad, where we advocate for greater diplomatic pressure from the UK on states where identifying publicly as a humanist can cost someone their life or their freedom.

Support for humanists at risk worldwide

Under our new strategy, we have prioritised our commitment to advancing freedom of religion or belief for all, and to draw greater attention, in particular from the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO), to the plight of people persecuted for their humanist beliefs. These case studies are sadly all too numerous and too tragic, but receive far less attention in national media or the words of public officials as compared to cases involving persecution of people for their religious beliefs.

A key case of concern in this context remained that of our colleague Mubarak Bala, the President of the Nigerian Humanist Association, who was arrested in April 2020 for being 'annoying to Muslims on Facebook'. Mubarak was held without charge for 16 months, before being charged with blasphemy in August 2021. Irregularities have plagued his case. In Kano state, where he was moved to upon arrest, the crime of blasphemy can attract a death sentence under sharia law; under Nigeria's parallel civil legal system, it can land a lengthy custodial sentence. We continue to call for Mubarak's immediate and unconditional release, and through our meetings with the FCDO have promoted several meetings between UK and Nigerian officials about his case. We also continued to raise Mubarak's case through our interventions at the UN Human Rights Council.

In support of Humanists International's campaign to secure his safety and freedom, we, many of our patrons, and members of the APPHG signed an open letter calling for his immediate and unconditional release. Signatories among many others included our President Alice Roberts; Vice Presidents Jim Al-Khalili, Polly Toynbee, and AC Grayling; patrons Stephen Fry, Wole Soyinka, and Richard Dawkins; and APPHG members Crispin Blunt MP, Joan Bakewell, and Alf Dubs.

We organised a special meeting of the APPHG where Members of Parliament and peers could hear first-hand testimonies from victims of non-religious persecution from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nigeria, as well as from the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief on the extent of the problem more generally, and the UK Government on what it is doing to tackle it. On behalf of the Government, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Minister for Human Rights at FCDO, made a speech in support of the non-religious. Speakers included Gulalai Ismail, humanist and internationally recognised human rights activist; Leo Igwe, founder of the Humanist Association of Nigeria; and Asif Mohiuddin, Bangladeshi humanist blogger and assassination survivor; and Ahmed Shaheed, the UN Special Rapporteur. The meeting was attended by staff from the office

of the Prime Minister's Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief and by the Shadow Africa Minister, and prompted several parliamentary questions in the following weeks.

Humanists International published its 2021 *Freedom of Thought Report* in December, to which we contributed research on the UK, Barbados, and relevant case work internationally, which was collated alongside contributions from other Humanists International members. It is the authoritative global review of the treatment of the non-religious around the world. We alerted FCDO to its publication.

International freedom of religion or belief (FoRB)

Our longstanding commitment to FoRB also extends to campaigning for the rights of religious people to their beliefs, as well as humanists. It was the subject of numerous meetings and a great deal of correspondence with the FCDO and with Labour's Shadow Foreign Affairs team.

In the UK Parliament, we briefed MPs about the persecution of the non-religious in India, ahead of a debate in the House of Commons on freedom of religion or belief there, and our briefing was reflected in speeches by Naz Shah MP and Stephen Timms MP. We contributed to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief (APPG for FoRB)'s report, *Commentary on the Current State of International Freedom of Religion or Belief (2020)*. We regularly attended meetings of the APPG and the UK FoRB Forum. Our Chief Executive is on the Steering Group of the latter.

We attended the 46th, 47th and 48th sessions of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, remotely, making interventions in relation to ethnic cleansing of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar; the mass internment of Muslims in China's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region; Pakistan's persecution of Ahmadi Muslims using blasphemy laws; Iran's poor treatment of FoRB issues and seeking the release of prisoners of conscience Liza Tebyanian and Professor Ahmadreza Djalali; the impact of Covid-19 on FoRB; Nigeria's imprisonment of our colleague Mubarak Bala; the Maldivian Government's criminal sanctions for blasphemy and apostasy; the harms of so-called 'conversion therapy' (made jointly with the Ozanne Foundation); widespread failures to guarantee reproductive and sexual health rights during the pandemic (made jointly with the British Pregnancy Advisory Service); genocide (made jointly with René Cassin, the Jewish voice for human rights); apostasy and blasphemy laws in Somalia; and the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan.

We organised over 20 MPs and peers to write to the Prime Minister, expressing concern about the appointment of Fiona Bruce MP as his Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief, given her strong track record as anti-LGBT rights, anti-abortion, and anti-humanist campaigner. We received reassurances from the Human Rights Minister of the UK Government's commitment to the human rights of humanists, women, and LGBT people. This intervention attracted wide media coverage. We subsequently met her and established a working relationship.

Following the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan in August, we have been urging the UK Government to do what it can to support the humanitarian needs of the Afghan people, acting in conjunction with Humanists International. We mobilised our members to those ends and called on the UK Government to use international levers to uphold Afghans'

rights and safety and to do more to support human rights defenders and refugees. We signed a joint letter organised by the International Religious Freedom Roundtable (IRFR) to US President Joe Biden calling for the evacuation of Afghan religious and non-religious minorities.

We signed a letter with IRFR to Irene Khan, UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, regarding the Algerian authorities' arbitrary detention and sentencing of Hamid Soudad, a 42-year-old Christian in Oran, Algeria.

Abolishing blasphemy laws (Scotland and Northern Ireland)

Domestically, we continued to campaign against blasphemy laws in statute as these are often cited by human rights-abusing countries like Pakistan in justification of their barbaric treatment of non-religious people, religious minorities, and political dissidents. In Scotland, where we supported Humanist Society Scotland in campaigning for the abolition of the Scots blasphemy law, the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act received royal assent. It benefited from significant revisions to protect freedom of speech and the rights of the non-religious as a result of our and Humanist Society Scotland's contributions.

In Northern Ireland, we met MLAs numerous times about a possible Executive or private member's bill on repealing blasphemy. Our campaign received wholehearted support from the Northern Ireland Minister for Justice, who went on record as supporting it and who attempted to secure provision for repeal in an upcoming justice bill. However, it fell out of the Bill following negotiations with the Executive, and the Bill was narrowed to focus only upon sexual offences and stalking. We began work anticipating a new Bill following the Northern Ireland elections, and started work on scoping a coalition of Northern Ireland charities and groups who support our proposed reforms.

Sensitive subjects in school lessons

In March, we expressed our alarm at the case of the RE teacher who was suspended from his job for reportedly showing pupils images of the Prophet Mohammed. We were deeply concerned by the tenor of the media coverage, which seemingly supported a prohibition on blasphemy in schools generally, and made no allowances for a sensitive, well-balanced lesson on attitudes to religion, criticisms of religion, or blasphemy, which in the end is what it turns out was being being taught in the school in question. Our Chief Executive discussed the issue on BBC Radio 4's *Sunday* programme and our quote was featured in a number of national newspaper stories on the subject. We also wrote to the then Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities, and Local Government, Robert Jenrick, and Conservative MP, Sajid Javid, to express our support for their statements condemning the harassment of the teacher at the heart of the case, who went into hiding after his name and address were leaked and he received credible death threats.

Medical-ethical issues and global challenges

Our policy continues to emphasise a number of areas where humanists, and humanist thinking, can make unique contributions to public debate. Notably in 2021 this led to the following actions.

Public health

As part of our ongoing contributions to the national effort against coronavirus, and our longstanding commitment to public understanding of science, we embarked on a programme of communications and activity to support the National Health Service's rollout of Covid-19 vaccines. As well as wider social media messaging, this included maintaining an information page about the vaccine programme on our website, hosting a panel discussion on the science of vaccines, and hosting Oxford Professor of Vaccinology Sarah Gilbert, of Oxford/Astrazeneca vaccine fame, as our appointed Rosalind Franklin lecturer. We also released results of a survey of our members which showed 95% intended to take the vaccine immediately when offered, reflecting the evidence-led and socially conscious attitudes of humanists on medical-ethical issues.

Separately, the APPHG met in March online to discuss the impact of Covid-19 on the non-religious, including on our pastoral carers working in hospitals and prisons and humanist funeral and wedding celebrants, and the impact across the globe. The meeting was chaired by Joan Bakewell and heard from the Chief Executive of Humanists International Gary McLelland; Lindsay van Dijk, Lead Chaplain, Buckinghamshire NHS Trust, and Chair of the Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network; Hannah McKerchar, a humanist celebrant and the Network Coordinator for Yorkshire and the Humber; and our Chief Executive.

Organ donation

Following on from the successful introduction of opt-out organ donation registers in Great Britain, we lobbied Members of the Legislative Assembly in Northern Ireland in favour of similar legislation in July. The Executive subsequently introduced a bill to do just that, which became law early in 2022.

'Complementary and alternative medicine'

We publicised the decision of the Professional Standards Authority, an independent but statutory safeguarding organisation that regulates and registers professionals working in the fields of health and social care, to suspend accreditation of the Society of Homeopaths, after repeated concerns were raised about the practices of some of its members. This suspension was brought about by complaints made by the Good Thinking Society and our patron Simon Singh.

The environment

In March, we announced the launch of Humanist Climate Action (HCA), a new volunteer-led network that will ensure that the non-religious have a voice in the major environmental debates of our time, under the tagline 'for the one planet we have'. Following its launch event in May, it directed its members to various opportunities to contribute to campaigns around the climate crisis. It organised its own Earth Day publicity campaign around planting trees and participated in protests in London and Glasgow (alongside Humanist Society Scotland) around the COP26 global summit on climate change. In June, it called on the UK Government to rethink its approach to environmental policy in response to a consultation by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Animal welfare

The humanist commitment to improved treatment of sentient animals is featured more prominently in our new strategy, which explicitly endorses the World Organisation for Animal Health's Five Freedoms for Animals under human control as a basis for policy engagement with officials.

As a religion or belief-specialised human rights charity, we take further interest in the intersection of animal welfare policy with religion or belief, and advocate strongly alongside animal welfare charities for the closure of loopholes to animal welfare legislation relating to religious slaughter. We responded to a consultation on the labelling of meat products from the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs and supported labelling to indicate if an animal was stunned prior to slaughter, in line with animal welfare laws. This measure would ensure that consumers are informed and empowered to make choices about their food in accordance with their beliefs and preferences, and prevent non-stunned meat from religious slaughterhouses unlawfully entering the general market. We also voiced our support for an amendment from West Dorset MP Chris Loder to the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill which would have reduced the number of animals slaughtered without pre-stunning to render them insensitive to pain.

4. Humanists UK is respected for our expertise and professionalism and recognised as the leading national voice for the non-religious

We continued to be the go-to national organisation for the non-religious and for information about humanism, and were frequently sought out by the media for comment on press stories in this capacity. We were delighted to see this status reflected in the generous comments made by Sir Keir Starmer, Lord Greenhalgh, Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, Sian Berry, and Sir Ed Davey on the occasion of our 125th anniversary.

As well as this, the leaders of every Northern Ireland party gave fulsome quotes praising the work of Northern Ireland Humanists for the foreword to our *Five Years of Northern Ireland Humanists* report (except that the DUP's supportive quote came from their deputy leader due to an ongoing leadership election). The report highlighted just how much progress has been made in Northern Ireland since we founded Northern Ireland Humanists in 2016, including legal recognition of humanist marriages, legal abortion, legal same-sex marriages, a rapidly growing humanist movement, and various other knock-on effects for humanist equality and civil rights more widely.

As detailed in relation to our first aim, one of the major focuses of our year was celebrating our 125th anniversary and using the opportunity to shine more light on the history of humanist thinking in the UK. This has been a helpful opportunity to reflect publicly on the great many national heroes who were humanists (and part of this organisation) but whose humanism is under-recognised, as well as unsung heroes of UK civil rights campaigning who were humanists (disproportionately women). This work has inspired further academic and public interest. We were delighted when the Vernon Lee Society invited our Humanist Heritage Coordinator to give its annual lecture on relevant findings from the project, among her other speaking engagements.

In July, our Chief Executive was invited to lead the national memorial ceremony at Olympic Park in London to remember and celebrate the lives of NHS England workers who died during the pandemic. This coincided with NHS anniversary celebrations, and reflected humanist involvement in the founding of the NHS and our own role as the national institution representing the non-religious.

Other appointments showed high esteem for our personnel and our work. Our Chief Executive served on the steering group of the UK Freedom of Religion or Belief Forum. Our Wales Coordinator was elected to the RE Council's Board, while our Director of Understanding Humanism served on its Education Committee – both contributing to discussions on the advantages of a worldviews curriculum over a world religions curriculum. Our Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network chair, Lindsey van Dijk, was appointed as Head of Chaplaincy at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, making her one of the most senior pastoral carers in the UK, and promoting greater public recognition of non-religious pastoral support. And our Dialogue Officer was invited to consult on resources about inter-belief dialogue for the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

We were delighted to appoint journalist Felicity Hannah, co-founder of WordPress Mike Little, comedian Angela Barnes, biologist Professor Nichola Raihani, science broadcaster and former professional poker champion Liv Boeree, author Jane Fallon, and journalist Matthew d'Ancona as our newest patrons.

5. Humanists UK is an expanding, financially healthy, and sustainable movement

Our fundraising

Membership and unrestricted donation income performed in line with pandemic-adjusted budgets, with modest growth seen in our membership income. However, high inflation means that our rate of growth is not producing significantly more buying power for our activities. Thankfully, membership sign-ups were less volatile than in 2020, when we saw dips around the announcement of the first lockdown and surges around later coronavirus-themed appeals. We made two large postal appeals to members, addressing rising religious nationalism and discrimination against the non-religious. In October, we organised another successful crowdfunder for our Education Campaigns Manager's salary. Reflecting increased sensitivities around death, we also continued to pause planned activity asking for gifts in wills. Similarly, our Blackham Society events targeted at major donors continued to take place online, reflecting public health guidelines. Our budgeting work for our 2025 strategy set healthy goals for realistic levels of further growth.

People and systems

In September 2021, we hired our first Head of People, whose role is to develop our first ever people strategy, reflecting the enormous growth our voluntary workforce has seen in recent years, now amounting to 425 volunteers, 32 consultants, and 563 celebrants, alongside a team of 33 staff. The new people strategy will help us to develop our employer and volunteering brand, future-proof our organisation, professionalise our HR approach, enhance engagement across all personnel, and improve workforce

development, unlocking new efficiencies and greater utilisation of people's time and talents. The Head of People is also responsible for moving forward our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) agenda. An EDI Action group consisting of staff, volunteers, celebrants, and members of the Association of Black Humanists met several times to discuss and work towards recommendations about making our staff and volunteer recruitment, public activity, and working practices maximally inclusive of humanists from all backgrounds.

Most staff continued to work from home, with the office available to any staff members or volunteers who had need of it. We communicated with staff at various intervals about a scheduled full return to normal office working patterns, alongside hybrid home/office working.

Our IT department had one of its busiest ever years, supporting remote working and ICT needs across the full workforce, as well as working on several major projects. Various public-facing and behind-the-scenes systems underwent significant changes. One major new development was the launch of our Humanists UK People platform, consolidating various training, induction, and intranet platforms previously developed for staff, volunteers, and celebrants to use, and emphasising the goals of our developing people strategy. Among other things, the website also allows us to better track learning, development, and training data across the workforce. We also moved our website URL from humanism.org.uk to humanists.uk; made significant developments with our new website, which went into alpha testing; changed all our payment processing systems; built a website for the new Coalition for Inclusive Education in Northern Ireland, which we are helping to get on its feet; and developed a new *Understanding Humanism* website to launch in January 2022.

Financial Review

We ended the year with a surplus on unrestricted funds of £395,574. Legacy income remained high (£543k), though significantly down when compared to 2020. Though our legacy income fluctuates significantly, we have taken the decision to assume we will continue to benefit from a modest number of legacies throughout the course of our 5-year strategy.

Grant income in furtherance of pastoral support was postponed to 2022 pending the resumption of related activities. We also continued to receive Job Retention Scheme (furlough) grants from the Government.

Membership and unrestricted donations income performed in line with pandemic-adjusted budgets, with modest growth seen in our membership income (4%). However, high inflation meant that our rate of growth did not not produce significantly more buying power for our activities.

Expenditure on charitable activity increased by 5%, reflecting the gradual lifting of restrictions on face-to face activities that were in place during the pandemic. Expenditure was closely monitored to make savings where possible in the face of inflation.

Events and training courses remained largely online, though greater in number than in 2020. While some activities remained curtailed due to the pandemic, we were able to

invest in exciting areas of work, for example the creation of an Apostasy Support Services Manager role which will strengthen our Faith to Faithless work. Support costs increased partly due to the creation of a new senior management role supervising our volunteer support, ceremonies and humanist care networks.

As a result of the legacy income, the remarkable support of our members plus the ongoing restrictions on expenditure, our financial position is healthier than at the start of 2021. We have invested in charity-specialist fund portfolios to protect the value of our assets in this turbulent period. Our 5-year strategy is now underway where we plan to significantly draw down on our funds, leveraging expenditure to make long-lasting change in public policy, in the public's understanding of humanism, and in the ability of non-religious people to live happier, confident and more ethical lives. Given the uncertain wider economic outlook, this is a fortunate position to be in and we are grateful to everyone involved in making it so.

Reserves

Our reserves are defined as those unrestricted funds held long term for precautionary purposes. The trustees consider that the reserves held by Humanists UK should be sufficient to:

- allow us to continue our work in the event of a temporary downturn in income streams. Such concerns might include: an absence of any legacy income for a few years (which, while we deliberately do not budget for legacy income, might restrict a number of activities from being undertaken), a decline in voluntary income, or a failure to increase income at the budgeted rate, and other risks identified annually in the risk register;
- take advantage of an unforeseen opportunity: an item of news, for example, which could trigger a publicity campaign, or an opportunity to change policy through campaigning;
- meet an unforeseen need: a legal challenge, for example, or a sudden need for a significant IT systems change.

Humanists UK will therefore hold an upper limit of four months' annual expenditure and a lower limit of three months' expenditure in reserves to cover these emergencies. All other liquid and near liquid assets are available to fund those activities identified in Humanists UK's Strategic Plan.

At the end of the year total funds held amounted to £3,047,273 of which £118,623 are held for restricted purposes, £400,000 are for designated purposes (a building fund) and £8,903 are represented by the Association's tangible fixed assets and can only be realised on their disposal. The remaining financial assets of the Association were £2,519,747, of which all but £88,000 is budgeted to be spent between now and 2025. Fund levels are more than sufficient to meet the requirements of our reserves policy (three months budgeted expenditure being £766k). For this reason we have agreed a deficit budget for 2022-2025.

Fundraising Policy

Our approach to fundraising reflects that supporters are at the heart of what we do, and fundraising materials are designed to ensure that donors and potential donors understand that they can withdraw from fundraising communications, or any other

communications, at any time, simply and without fuss. We do not use fundraising services, consultants, or external professional fundraisers to undertake fundraising activities on our behalf, and we do not sell or licence data to (or buy data from) any external agencies or third parties. We send a weekly e-newsletter to subscribers (which they can unsubscribe from) sharing information about our charitable work and fundraising activities. All new marketing materials are checked to comply with the Fundraising Code of Practice as part of an internal publications sign-off procedure.

We host a range of events throughout the year. Fundraising events are explicitly billed as such. Events are closely monitored at internal meetings before and after every event, and detailed profit and loss registers are kept for large events. We will never exert undue pressure on those invited to attend an event or to donate. All income and expenditure related to volunteer-led fundraising is reported to the appropriate line manager within the staff team, and annual statements are approved by both the volunteer and the responsible manager.

We take very seriously our responsibility and make our best efforts not to approach or pressure vulnerable people to support our work. We take a robust approach to complaints about fundraising, whether in person, or online, or by another medium; these are promptly followed up by the responsible officers, their line managers, or by a member of the Board (as appropriate).

Investment policy and objectives

The Trustees' investment policy is to generate the highest possible returns over the long term, consistent with our risk appetite and appropriate protection for our capital, so as to maximise the resources that can be expended on our charitable objectives. We have short and long-term investment policies that reflect our needs over different timeframes. Monitoring of the investment performance takes place through regular investment reports and investment performance results are reported and discussed at Trustee meetings and compared to industry benchmarks where applicable.

We entered the year with funds invested as cash deposits with Flagstone, which we retained through 2021. We reinvested in a portfolio consisting of units held in Barclays Charity Fund and also created a portfolio of investments with BNY Mellon. This blend reflects the low-risk appetite necessary given the planned utilisation of funds over the course of our new strategic period (to 2025).

Risk management

The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate systems and procedures have been established to identify and manage the major risks faced by the Association. They have developed a comprehensive risk management policy to ensure that all important risks are evaluated and appropriate mitigating action taken. Governance and management, operational, financial, legal and other risks are reviewed annually by the Trustees and continually monitored by the senior management team who take responsibility for implementation of the policies and procedures identified to reduce risks. Corrective actions are based on the likelihood of particular events occurring and how critical the consequences would be. Annual risk reviews include considerations of operating plan activities, finance, insurance, trademark, office building, fire, health and safety, and terms and conditions of employment of staff. Significant potential risks identified were reputational and legal risks associated with front-line service provision, reliance on core

specialist staff, compliance risks with regulatory frameworks such as data protection, and operational risks as a result of poor media relations or insufficient income generation. Actions taken to mitigate risks included the creation of a Head of People role to ensure better in-house good practice, improved staff & volunteer inductions, a policies review, and greater attempts to diversify income streams.

Future Plans

Having deferred development of our new strategic plan during the pandemic, in 2021 we launched this new phase of our work. Humanists UK's key objectives for 2022 are to fully implement this new strategy, in particular promoting a wider understanding of humanism, enabling humanists to express their beliefs and values and enabling more people to enjoy greater freedom of thought, of expression, and of choice over their own lives.

The key planned activities to achieve these objectives are partly a continuation of those outlined in this report – public affairs work on a range of policy issues, greater provision of education materials, growth of our networks of celebrants, school volunteers, humanist care volunteers and services for people leaving high-control religions volunteers. There are also new activities such as a greater emphasis on creating a range of humanism-focussed resources for the public. We also plan to return to a greater range of in-person activities (both training programmes and public events), these activities having largely been on hold due to covid.

Statement of Directors' Responsibilities

Humanists UK's trustees are directors of the company for the purposes of company law and are responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable company and charity law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the Association for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the principles of the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Association will continue to operate.

The Directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Association and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Association and

hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Association's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The Directors confirm that, in the case of each of the persons who are Directors at the date of this report, the following applies:

- so far as each Director is aware, there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the Company's auditors in connection with preparing their report) of which the Company's auditors are unaware; and
- each Director has taken steps to make herself/himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

In accordance with S485 of the Companies Act 2006, a resolution proposing the reappointment of Knox Cropper LLP as auditors will be put to the General Meeting.

On behalf of the Board: Tamar Ghosh, Chair, 7 May 2022

Independent auditor's report to the members of the British Humanist Association for the year ended 31st December 2021

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the British Humanist Association (the 'charitable company', operating as Humanists UK) for the year ended 31 December 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2021 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland'; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditor's report to the members of the British Humanist Association for the year ended 31st December 2021 (cont.)

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the

Independent auditor's report to the members of the British Humanist Association for the year ended 31st December 2021 (cont.)

small companies' exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Directors.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- The Charitable Company is required to comply with both company law and charity law and, based on our knowledge of its activities, we identified that the legal requirement to accurately account for restricted funds was of key significance.
- We gained an understanding of how the charitable company complied with its legal and regulatory framework, including the requirement to properly account for restricted funds, through discussions with management and a review of the documented policies, procedures and controls.
- The audit team, which is experienced in the audit of charities, considered the charitable company's susceptibility to material misstatement and how fraud may occur. Our considerations included the risk of management override.
- Our approach was to check that restricted income was properly identified and separately accounted for and to ensure that only valid and appropriate

Independent auditor's report to the members of the British Humanist Association for the year ended 31st December 2021 (cont.)

expenditure was charged to restricted funds. This included reviewing journal adjustments and unusual transactions.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken, so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report or for the opinions we have formed.

Richard Billinghamurst (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Knox Cropper LLP, Statutory Auditor
65 Leadenhall Street
London
EC3A 2AD

7 May 2022

Statement of Financial Activities including the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 December 2021

		Funds 2021			Funds 2020		
		Restricted	Unrestricted	Total 2021	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
	Notes	£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOME FROM:							
- Legacies and donations	2	156,469	1,231,063	1,387,532	289,741	1,695,384	1,985,125
- Other trading activities	3	-	-	-	-	240	240
- Investments	4	-	8,536	8,536	-	2,408	2,408
- Charitable activities	5	-	1,297,248	1,297,248	-	1,209,104	1,209,104
Total		<u>156,469</u>	<u>2,536,847</u>	<u>2,693,316</u>	<u>289,741</u>	<u>2,907,136</u>	<u>3,196,877</u>
EXPENDITURE ON:							
- Raising funds	6	-	(183,015)	(183,015)	-	(173,558)	(173,558)
- Charitable activities	7,8	(166,921)	(1,970,044)	(2,136,965)	(270,270)	(1,762,778)	(2,033,048)
Total		<u>(166,921)</u>	<u>(2,153,059)</u>	<u>(2,319,980)</u>	<u>(270,270)</u>	<u>(1,936,336)</u>	<u>(2,206,606)</u>
Net gains/(losses) on investments	11	-	11,786	11,786	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure)		(10,452)	395,574	385,122	19,471	970,800	990,271
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		(10,452)	395,574	385,122	19,471	970,800	990,271
Balances brought forward at 1 January		<u>129,075</u>	<u>2,533,076</u>	<u>2,662,151</u>	<u>109,604</u>	<u>1,562,276</u>	<u>1,671,880</u>
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 DECEMBER		<u>118,623</u>	<u>2,928,650</u>	<u>3,047,273</u>	<u>129,075</u>	<u>2,533,076</u>	<u>2,662,151</u>

All amounts relate to continuing activities.

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2021

		2021		2020	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Office equipment	10		8,903		19,566
Investments	11		<u>2,071,489</u>		<u>1,649,371</u>
			2,080,392		1,668,937
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	12	173,864		108,096	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>876,766</u>		<u>989,746</u>	
		1,050,630		1,097,842	
LIABILITIES					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(83,749)</u>		<u>(104,628)</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			<u>966,881</u>		<u>993,214</u>
NET ASSETS			<u>3,047,273</u>		<u>2,662,151</u>
Represented by					
FUNDS :					
Unrestricted	14		2,928,650		2,533,076
Restricted	15		<u>118,623</u>		<u>129,075</u>
Total Funds			<u>3,047,273</u>		<u>2,662,151</u>

The accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act relating to small companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard 102.

Approved by the Directors on 7 May 2022 and signed on their behalf by:

Tamar Ghosh _____ Hon. Chair

John Adams _____ Hon. Treasurer

Company number: 00228781

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ending 31 December 2021

		2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	24	<u>288,816</u>	<u>1,117,121</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Dividends and interest from investments		8,536	2,408
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		-	-
Proceeds from sale of investments		-	-
Purchase of investments		(748,446)	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		<u>(739,910)</u>	<u>2,408</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(451,094)	1,119,529
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		2,639,117	1,519,588
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	25	<u><u>2,188,023</u></u>	<u><u>2,639,117</u></u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2021

1. Accounting policies

Basis of Preparation

These Financial Statements are presented in pounds sterling and have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (the Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Humanists UK meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. The world continues to face economic uncertainty in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. Because of our prudent reserves policy we are in a better relative position than some other charities, but financial uncertainty does remain. Being almost completely reliant on individual donors and members for our income, we keep a concerned eye on the increasing burden on households' cost of living in the UK.

Short term debtors and creditors

Debtors are recognised when the Charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably, and it is probable that the income will be received. Creditors are recognised when the Charity has a present legal or constructive obligation resulting from a past event to make payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty are detailed in the above accounting policies where applicable.

Prepayments & Accruals

Prepayments and accruals less than £100 have not been taken into consideration.

Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

All tangible assets costing more than £500 were capitalised and all tangible assets are valued at historic cost. Provision is made for depreciation on tangible fixed assets, at

rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life.

Office Equipment:	20% p.a. straight line
Computer equipment:	33 1/3% p.a. straight line
Office fixtures & fittings:	10% p.a. straight line

Fixed asset investments

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. The statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on the revaluations and disposals throughout the year.

Realised gains and losses on investments are arrived at by comparing the net sale proceeds with the market value at the end of the previous financial year. Unrealised gains and losses represent the difference between the market value of investments still held at the end of the financial year with their value at the beginning of the year or with their cost if purchased subsequently.

Value Added Tax

The Charity is registered for VAT and where applicable amounts are included net of VAT.

Funds

Unrestricted funds are those funds which can be used at the trustees' discretion. Restricted Funds are those funds where application is restricted by conditions set by the donor. Designated Funds are those funds, which have been earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

Deferrals Policy

Income is recognised when all the following criteria are met:

- Control over the rights or other access to the economic benefit exists
- It is more likely than not that the economic benefits will pass to the Association
- The monetary value of the income can be measured reliably.

Grants Receivable

Revenue grants are credited to incoming resources on the earlier of the date they are received or the date they are receivable, unless they relate to a specific future period, in which case they are deferred. Capital grants for the purchase of fixed assets are credited to restricted incoming resources when they become receivable. Depreciation on the related fixed assets is charged against the restricted fund.

Donations and Legacies

Donations and legacies are recognised as income when the Association becomes unconditionally entitled to receive them, and when the receipt is probable and its value can be predicted with reasonable accuracy.

Charitable Activities

Costs of charitable activities include direct expenditure and an apportionment of overhead, governance and support costs as shown in note 7.

Allocation of Overhead, Governance and Support Costs

Overhead and support costs are incurred centrally across the range of our activities throughout the year. Governance costs comprise all costs involving the public accountability of the Charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice. These include costs related to statutory audit. All these costs have been apportioned between charitable activities on the basis of staff time or office space depending on the nature of the cost. The Directors consider this to be a reasonable reflection of the utilisation of resources.

Pensions

The Charity contributes to various defined contribution pension schemes on behalf of employees and, as the charity's liability is limited to paying amounts as they fall due, the pension charge reflected in the accounts represents the amount payable for the year.

2. Legacies, grants and donations

	2021			2020
	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total £	Total £
Donations and Gift Aid	142,149	688,072	830,221	970,995
Grants	14,320	-	14,320	120,177
Legacies	-	542,991	542,991	893,953
	<u>156,469</u>	<u>1,231,063</u>	<u>1,387,532</u>	<u>1,985,125</u>

In the preceding year Donations and Gift Aid included £169,564 restricted income and £120,177 restricted grants. Grants income in the current year includes £14,320 receivable from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

3. Income from other trading activities

	2021			2020
	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total £	Total £
Rent & charges to tenants	-	-	-	240
	-	-	-	<u>240</u>

4. Investment income

	2021			2020
	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total £	Total £
Interest	-	8,536	8,536	2,223
Dividends	-	-	-	185
	-	<u>8,536</u>	<u>8,536</u>	<u>2,408</u>

5. Income from charitable activities

	2021			2020
	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
Subscriptions	-	879,163	879,163	844,159
Group fees	-	210	210	2,860
Celebrants' training	-	201,534	201,534	171,730
Celebrants' accreditation fees	-	126,414	126,414	117,445
Marriage administration fees	-	16,700	16,700	7,033
Events & activities	-	36,797	36,797	49,378
Sales of literature & merchandise	-	15,746	15,746	8,462
Education	-	12,097	12,097	3,895
Pastoral support	-	188	188	-
Sundry income	-	8,400	8,400	4,142
	-	<u>1,297,248</u>	<u>1,297,248</u>	<u>1,209,104</u>

6. Cost of raising funds

	2021			2020
	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
Fundraising costs	-	177,313	177,313	169,439
Investment manager's fees	-	3,270	3,270	2,243
Purchase of merchandise	-	<u>2,432</u>	<u>2,432</u>	<u>1,876</u>
	-	<u>183,015</u>	<u>183,015</u>	<u>173,558</u>

7. Analysis of costs of charitable activities

	2021		
	Direct Costs	Support Costs	Total
Education and Public Awareness	(385,840)	(261,470)	(647,310)
Humanist Ceremonies	(273,875)	(139,922)	(413,797)
Humanist Care	(101,969)	(83,847)	(185,816)
Public Affairs & Policy	(418,347)	(277,699)	(696,046)
Activities for Members and Partner Groups	<u>(134,952)</u>	<u>(59,044)</u>	<u>(193,996)</u>
	<u>(1,314,983)</u>	<u>(821,982)</u>	<u>(2,136,965)</u>

	2020		
	Direct Costs	Support	Total
<i>Education and Promotion of Humanism</i>	<i>(456,157)</i>	<i>(163,253)</i>	<i>(619,410)</i>
<i>Ceremonies</i>	<i>(250,564)</i>	<i>(106,766)</i>	<i>(357,330)</i>
<i>Pastoral Support</i>	<i>(103,230)</i>	<i>(77,835)</i>	<i>(181,065)</i>
<i>Public Affairs & Policy</i>	<i>(402,483)</i>	<i>(262,778)</i>	<i>(665,261)</i>
<i>Activities for Members and Partner Groups</i>	<i><u>(100,345)</u></i>	<i><u>(109,637)</u></i>	<i><u>(209,982)</u></i>
	<i><u>(1,312,779)</u></i>	<i><u>(720,269)</u></i>	<i><u>(2,033,048)</u></i>

8. Analysis of support and governance costs

	2021	2020
	£	£
Staff costs	435,723	370,096
Rent and rates	120,882	103,339
Repairs, maintenance & utilities	11,209	15,150
Postage and stationery	8,102	23,312
ICT	64,537	81,536
Irrecoverable VAT	64,207	30,076
Subscriptions	4,940	5,712
Bank charges & interest	69,105	55,518
Depreciation	10,663	11,653
Other costs	22,347	12,745
Governance	<u>10,267</u>	<u>11,132</u>
	<u>821,982</u>	<u>720,269</u>

Support costs have been apportioned between categories of charitable activity according to whether they are overheads or centrally incurred expenditure on charitable activities. Overheads have been apportioned in relation to the office space occupied by each area of activity, and centrally incurred expenditure on charitable activities has been apportioned in relation to the staff time employed in each area of activity. The Directors consider this provides a reasonable approximation to the utilisation of resources. Increased staff costs partly reflects the creation of a new senior management role supervising our volunteer support, ceremonies and humanist care networks.

Governance costs

	2021	2020
	£	£
Audit fee- current year	5,250	5,597
- previous year underprovision	-	-
Other professional expenses	13	13
Trustee meeting expenses	<u>5,004</u>	<u>5,522</u>
	<u>10,267</u>	<u>11,132</u>

9. Staff costs

	2021	2020
	£	£
Wages and salaries	1,131,362	1,127,065
Social security costs	118,065	120,078
Pension contributions	<u>61,996</u>	<u>51,052</u>
Total payroll costs	1,311,423	1,298,195
Staff recruitment	20,818	3,759
Temporary staff	<u>-</u>	<u>612</u>
	<u>1,332,241</u>	<u>1,302,566</u>

Average number of employees (FTE)	29	30
Average number of employees	30	31

One employee earned in excess of £80,000 (2020: one) and that salary fell in band £80,000 to £90,000 (2020: £80,000-£90,000).

Key management personnel (£479,046) (2020: £440,663) includes Chief Executive, Director of Public Affairs & Policy, Director of Community Services (until August 2021), Director of Communications & Development, Director of Operations, Director of IT, Director of Understanding Humanism, Head of Humanist Care, Director of Ceremonies, Head of People.

Recruitment has been a significant challenge in the current environment, necessitating a notable increase in costs.

10. Tangible assets

	2021	2020
	£	£
Office Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment		
Cost at 1 January	106,975	106,975
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
As at 31 December	<u>106,975</u>	<u>106,975</u>
Depreciation at 1 January	(87,409)	(75,756)
Charge for the year	(10,663)	(11,653)
Disposals	-	-
Depreciation at 31 December	<u>(98,072)</u>	<u>(87,409)</u>
Net book value at 31 December	<u>8,903</u>	<u>19,566</u>

11. Investments

	2021	2020
	£	£
Market value at 1 January	-	-
Additions	748,446	-
Disposal proceeds	-	-
Realised gains/(losses)	-	-
Unrealised gains/(losses)	<u>11,786</u>	-
Market value at 31 December	760,232	-
Cash with brokers	<u>1,311,257</u>	<u>1,649,371</u>
Total investments at 31 December	<u>2,071,489</u>	<u>1,649,371</u>
Investments at cost 31 December	<u>748,446</u>	-

Investments with a market value in excess of 10% of the portfolio were:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Barclays Property Income Trust for Charities	352,044	-
Newton SRI Fund for Charities	408,188	-
Total	<u>760,232</u>	-

In the preceding year, investments funds were partly held with Barclays Wealth on deposit and partly with Flagstone as cash deposits. Our new strategic plan necessitated an updated Investments Policy with the aims of preserving capital value, ensuring high liquidity, and seeing a return on investment over the course of these five years. We

therefore reinvested in Barclays Charity Fund and invested in the Newton SRI Fund for Charities. We retained cash deposits with Flagstone.

12. Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Prepayments	42,533	4,990
Legacies receivable	7,000	-
Gift Aid	123,733	99,391
Other accrued income	-	3,715
Other debtors	598	-
	<u>173,864</u>	<u>108,096</u>

Prepayments are usually primarily event venue costs such as for our Annual Convention, plus rent.

13. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Accruals	14,408	36,244
Taxes: Payroll taxes	31,974	39,897
VAT	20,088	16,880
Deferred income	7,956	-
Holiday accrual	<u>9,323</u>	<u>11,607</u>
	<u>83,749</u>	<u>104,628</u>

Deferred income usually relates to event ticket sales, such as for our Annual Convention, though due to the pandemic such income remained significantly curtailed. All deferred income is recognised in the following financial year.

14. a) General reserves

	2021		
	Revaluation Reserve	Accumulated Income	Total
	£	£	£
Balance at 1 January 2021	-	2,138,130	2,138,130
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	-	388,734	388,734
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	-	11,786	11,786
Transfer on realisation	-	-	-
Transfer to designated funds	-	(10,000)	(10,000)
Balance at 31 December 2021	-	<u>2,528,650</u>	<u>2,528,650</u>

	2020		
	Revaluation Reserve	Accumulated Income	Total
	£	£	£
Balance at 1 January 2020	-	1,557,330	1,557,330
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	-	970,800	970,800
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	-	-	-
Transfer on realisation	-	-	-
Transfer to designated funds	-	(390,000)	(390,000)
Balance at 31 December 2020	-	<u>2,138,130</u>	<u>2,138,130</u>

b) Designated Reserves

	Balance at 1 January 2021	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfer	Balance at 31 December 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Building fund	390,000			10,000	400,000
Music (the Humanist choirs)	<u>4,946</u>	-	(4,946)	-	-
	<u>394,946</u>	-	(4,946)	<u>10,000</u>	<u>400,000</u>

15. Restricted funds

	Balance at 1 January 2021	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfer	Balance at 31 December 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Education	-	-	-	-	-
Public Affairs	-	2,722	(20,334)	17,612	-
Ceremonies	-	468	(468)	-	-
Local groups	6,898	801	(983)	-	6,716
Music (the Humanist choirs)	6,307	7,946	(431)	-	13,822
Campaign Against Faith Schools	35,489	65,612	(43,984)	(17,612)	39,505
Faith to Faithless	3,690	1,475	(5,165)	-	-
Accord	-	21,751	(21,751)	-	-
Assisted Dying	53,811	34,159	(38,303)	-	49,667
Defence Humanists	482	84	(22)	-	544
LGBT Humanists	8,381	991	(1,003)	-	8,369
Pastoral Support	14,017	140	(14,157)	-	-
Northern Ireland development	-	6,000	(6,000)	-	-
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	-	14,320	(14,320)	-	-
	<u>129,075</u>	<u>156,469</u>	<u>(166,921)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>118,623</u>

	Balance at 1 January 2020	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfer	Balance at 31 December 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Education	-	155	(155)	-	-
Public Affairs	-	2,216	(4,471)	2,255	-
Ceremonies	-	975	(975)	-	-
Local groups	7,151	2,161	(2,414)	-	6,898
Music (the Humanist choirs)	2,380	11,635	(7,708)	-	6,307
Campaign Against Faith Schools	27,594	56,417	(46,267)	(2,255)	35,489
Faith to Faithless	15,355	4,146	(15,811)	-	3,690
Accord	-	40,163	(40,163)	-	-
Assisted Dying	49,327	43,388	(38,904)	-	53,811
Defence Humanists	114	368	-	-	482
LGBT Humanists	7,684	1,789	(1,092)	-	8,381
Pastoral Support	-	25,210	(11,193)	-	14,017
Northern Ireland development	-	6,000	(6,000)	-	-
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	-	95,118	(95,118)	-	-
	<u>109,604</u>	<u>289,741</u>	<u>(270,270)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>129,075</u>

Accord

Donations to cover the payroll costs of one member of Humanists UK staff to work for the Accord Coalition.

Assisted Dying

This fund was created in 2018 to manage donations to cover the payroll costs of one member of Humanists UK staff to work on the Assisted Dying campaign with the My Death, My Decision coalition. The fund also includes donations towards assisted dying legal cases.

Campaign Against Faith Schools

Campaign against faith schools appeal funds are restricted to Humanists UK lobbying and campaigning work relating to 'faith' schools and related education campaigns. Funds raised by appeal in excess of the target sought are restricted to the public affairs fund, and are disclosed as a transfer above.

Ceremonies

This fund results from donations given to Humanists UK specifically for ceremonies work.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

This fund was created in 2020 to reflect grant income relating to staff who were on furlough during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Defence Humanists

This fund was created in 2012 to manage income and expenditure by the Defence Humanists, which joined as a new section in 2011.

Education

This fund results from legacies and donations given to support Humanists UK's work in promoting the understanding of Humanism in the education sphere. This includes efforts to place a free copy of the *What is Humanism? How Do You Live Without a God? And Other Big Questions for Kids* in every primary school in Britain.

Faith to Faithless

This fund was created in 2015 to manage income and expenditure in support of our Faith to Faithless programme, which helps people who are leaving religions.

LGBT Humanists

This fund was created in 2012 to manage income and expenditure by GALHA (now LGBT Humanists) which joined Humanists UK as a section in 2012.

Local Groups

This fund is for activities relating to the development of local humanist groups, including branches. It was formerly called Community Service Projects.

Music

This fund was initiated in 2010 by a donation from Alec Reed to fund a composer for two years and to establish the Humanists UK choirs on a secure footing. Current income derives directly from the activities of the choirs.

Northern Ireland Development

This fund was created in 2017 to support the development of Humanist UK's work in Northern Ireland.

Pastoral Support

This fund was created in 2012 to collect donations supporting our new initiative directed towards providing pastoral support to non-religious people in prison or in hospital. This fund was previously known as 'Community Services excluding Ceremonies'.

Public Affairs

This fund results from legacies and donations given to support Humanists UK lobbying and campaigning work.

16. Operating leases

At 31 December 2021 the Company had the following commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Land and buildings		Other	
	2021	2020	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Falling due within one year	97,608	97,608	8,955	8,955
Falling due between one and five years	10,845	108,453	12,368	21,324
Falling due later than five years	-	-	-	-
	<u>108,453</u>	<u>206,061</u>	<u>21,323</u>	<u>30,279</u>

The commitment in respect of land and buildings reflects the lease on the Association's premises which ends in February 2023. We have not set a provision for any dilapidation costs associated with the end of this lease.

17. Taxation

Humanists UK is a registered charity and is potentially exempt from tax in respect of income and capital gains received within the categories covered by Part II of the Corporation Taxes Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that such income or gains are exclusively applied to charitable purposes.

18. Directors' remuneration and expenses

Ewan Main, a Celebrant was paid £300 in fees & expenses as part of the celebrants training programme. Aside from Ewan Main, no remuneration, directly or indirectly, out

of the funds of the charity was paid or is payable for the year to any director or to any person known to be connected with any of them.

Directors were reimbursed a total of £229 (2020: £1,443) for travel expenses to attend meetings in connection with their duties. Expenses not reported in Note 18 normally include travel to various events, including public lectures and fundraising events.

19. Capital commitments

There were no capital commitments at 31 December 2021 (2020: nil).

20. Pension commitments

The charity contributed to individual defined contribution pension schemes for several employees. The assets of the schemes are held separately from those of the charity in independently administered funds. Total employer's contributions paid in the year were £61,996 (2020: £51,052).

21. Net assets

	2021		
	Fixed Assets	Net Current Assets	Total
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds	2,080,392	848,258	2,928,650
Restricted funds	-	118,623	118,623
	<u>2,080,392</u>	<u>966,881</u>	<u>3,047,273</u>

	2020		
	Fixed Assets	Net Current Assets	Total
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds	1,668,937	864,141	2,533,077
Restricted funds	-	129,075	129,075
	<u>1,668,937</u>	<u>993,215</u>	<u>2,662,151</u>

22. Reversionary interest

Humanists UK has been bequeathed a reversionary interest in a trust established under the terms of the Will of Christine Cotton, who died on 24 January 2000. The trust assets comprise a property occupied by the Life Tenant, investments and bank accounts. The value of the investments as at 31 May 2021 was £44,911 (5 April 2020: £44,369). The trustees have indicated to Humanists UK that the property (bought in 2002 for

£85,000) had a value in 2020 of between £145,000 and £158,000 by comparison with similar properties in the locality.

Because Humanists UK cannot predict when it will become entitled to the receipt of this legacy, no accrued income has been reflected in the accounts.

23. Related party transactions

Directors are not remunerated but are able to recover out of pocket expenses for attendance at Board meetings, the total amount reimbursed being disclosed in Note 18.

The Chief Executive of Humanists UK is also a Director of Humanists International and their President. The Association paid an annual subscription to Humanists International of £25,275 (2020: £21,852).

The Education Campaigns Manager of Humanists UK (Ruth Wareham then Robert Cann) is a member of the Executive of the Accord Coalition. The Accord Coalition uses desk space and office facilities at Humanists UK's premises for no charge.

The Wales Coordinator is a Director of the Religious Education Council, of which Humanists UK is a member and paid £900 in membership fees (2020: £900).

24. Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	2021	2020
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period	385,122	990,271
Depreciation charges	10,663	11,653
(Gains)/losses on investments	(11,786)	-
Dividends and interest from investments	(8,536)	(2,408)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(65,768)	191,298
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<u>(20,879)</u>	<u>(73,693)</u>
Net cash provided by/ (used in) operative activities	<u>288,816</u>	<u>1,117,121</u>

25. Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	876,766	989,746
Cash at brokers	<u>1,311,257</u>	<u>1,649,371</u>
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>2,188,023</u>	<u>2,639,117</u>

26. Statutory information

The British Humanist Association, operating as Humanists UK, is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England. The Association's registered number and registered office address can be found on the Legal and Administrative page of this Annual Report.