

13 May 2023

Humanists UK
39 Moreland Street
London EC1V 8BB
020 7079 3060
chiefexec@humanists.uk

To all members of Humanists UK

Dear Member,

Annual General Meeting
Sunday 11 June 2023 15:30 - 17:00
Liverpool Guild of Students, 160 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, L3 5TR

These papers contain the agenda for this year's AGM, the formal notice of the AGM, and the minutes of last year's AGM. Please bring them with you to the AGM. Our current Articles of Association and Byelaws can be downloaded at humanists.uk/members.

Registration for the formal AGM will be open throughout the weekend. The AGM will begin at 15:30. You are invited to join Trustees and staff for a glass of wine or soft drink from 17:00 to 17:30

2022 Report and Accounts

The 2022 Report and Accounts are available online at humanists.org.uk/members. A copy is also available for inspection at the Humanists UK office and, while a small number of copies will be available at the AGM, we encourage members to view the electronic version if possible. You can request a paper copy in advance of the AGM by emailing, telephoning, or writing to us.

In order to make sure that members who have questions concerning the accounts can have them answered without taking up too much time at the AGM, the Board will take written questions on the accounts in advance of the AGM and provide written answers to members attending the meeting. If you have any questions on the accounts, please submit them by email (agm@humanists.uk) or post by **09.00 on 1 June 2023**.

Resolutions and Motions

As part of the formal business of the AGM, the members will be asked to consider and pass the resolutions which are set out in the notice of the AGM. The resolutions are: to receive the report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022; the re-appointment of the auditor; and to authorise the trustees to determine their remuneration.

The following motion has also been received and will be discussed at the AGM:

Humanists UK is to be congratulated for setting up Humanist Climate Action as one of its sections, and for the progress HCA has made so far. HCA should continue to follow the policy of Humanists International, of which Humanists UK is a member, to "foster a social

and political commitment to urgent action and long-term policymaking to mitigate and prevent climate change”.

In addition, Humanists UK should adopt the following:

1. Humanists UK recognises that the climate crisis along with other damage that humans are inflicting on the natural world, as described by scientists, are an existential threat to the future of humanity. Humanists UK should provide guidance to humanists about how to react to this threat. This guidance should be prominent and frequent in Humanist UK communications.
2. Humanists UK should add a fourth tenet to the three tenets of humanism as displayed on its website. The fourth tenet should read that Humanism recognises that humans are part of the natural world and totally dependent upon it, and therefore should protect and nurture it.
3. Humanists UK should encourage humanists to make their voices heard about the climate crisis and other threats to wildlife, individually or as part of international or local campaigns, organisations or movements, or by actively supporting Humanist Climate Action.
4. Humanists UK should encourage humanists to adapt their lifestyles to reflect the need to lower carbon emissions and protect the natural world.
5. Humanists UK should commit to an environmental audit of its work and activities, and take into account environmental impacts in all of its future policies and campaigns, just as Equal Opportunities or Human Rights impacts are already taken into account.

Proposed by Cath Sutherland; seconded by Phil Walder

If you wish to submit any amendments to motions, you must do so by email (agm@humanism.org.uk) or post by 17.00 on 1 June 2023.

Any **Emergency Motions** (i.e. motions relating to matters of importance to Humanists UK that have arisen after the closing date for ordinary resolutions of **1 June 2023**) must be submitted to me or to the Chair before the start of the AGM. Emergency Motions may be proposed by Partner groups of Humanists UK or individual members and must also be seconded.

It should be noted that any motions passed are in law not resolutions of Humanists UK but only express the opinion of the meeting.

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

Best wishes,



Andrew Copson
Company Secretary, Humanists UK

Humanists UK
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Sunday 11 June 2023 15:30 - 17:00 (registration from 12:00, 11 June)
Liverpool Guild of Students, 160 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, L3 5TR

AGENDA

1. Adoption of Standing Orders
which are given in the Byelaws
2. Apologies for absence
3. Declarations of interest
4. Election of one Timekeeper and two Tellers
5. Minutes of the 2022 AGM
which are attached to this agenda
6. Matters arising from those minutes
which are not covered separately on this agenda
7. Chair's address
8. Elections to the Board of Trustees (candidate statements are attached to this agenda)
9. Formal part of the Business of the AGM as set out in the attached Notice
10. Motion proposed by Cath Sutherland, seconded by Phil Walder:

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Proposed by Cath Sutherland; seconded by Phil Walder

11. Emergency Motions

which must relate directly to core areas of our operation or existence, and be related to issues which have newly arisen since 2 May 2023, and must be presented to the Chair or Company Secretary before the start of the meeting

12. Any other business

which must be notified to the Company Secretary in advance of the AGM

Company Secretary
13 May 2023

Statements by candidates for election to the Board

John Adenitire

Sex: Male

Age: 34

Ethnicity: Black | African

Region: London

Why should people vote for you?

I can enhance the diversity of the board by adding to its legal and academic expertise.

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

I am a senior lecturer in the Law School of Queen Mary, UoL. I have published several books and academic papers on the relationship between the state, religion, and discrimination law.

My monograph, *A General Right to Conscientious Exemptions: Beyond Religious Privilege* (Cambridge 2020), is a leading text on how states should deal with the issue of conscientious objection without privileging religious believers over non-religious ones.

I am a qualified solicitor, although currently I do not practise. Based on my legal expertise, I have been consulted by Humanist UK on several occasions, including to assist with the litigation on compulsory collective worship and religious education in schools. Based on this expertise I believe that I would be able to contribute to the board's assessment of the legal risks and benefits that Humanist UK would incur in its strategy. Given that several of the campaigns that Humanist UK currently runs or has run, involve significant legal issues (e.g. the ban on conversion therapy, the litigation on collective worship, the ban on assisted suicide), this insight would assist the executive team in how best to select and strategise for ongoing and upcoming campaigns.

What is your vision for Humanists UK?

My vision for Humanist UK is to continue to be the leading voice for an approach to life based on reason and empathy. Given my legal background, I have been particularly interested in the policy and legal campaigns that Humanist UK has championed over the years (particularly in the area of non-discrimination). I also think that the education and pastoral work (i.e. weddings and funerals, etc.) it does are remarkable. I recently benefited from having a humanist wedding ceremony and I experienced first-hand how meaningful it was having this opportunity that Humanist UK offers. As a board member, I would support all of these activities while encouraging Humanist UK to expand its education and policy efforts regarding non-human animals. While there is an ongoing campaign on animal welfare, especially on the issue of religious slaughter without stunning, Humanist UK can expand its efforts on this cause to be a leading organisation that supports the expansion of the moral circle beyond the human family.

David Cockayne

Sex: Male

Age: 76

Ethnicity: White | British

Region: North West

Why should people vote for you?

I'm committed to Humanism and working to create more links between members in our community.

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

My professional work included designing in the theatre and also teaching in higher education. Both of these involve working closely with groups of people to explore issues and work towards shared solutions. All of this I found deeply satisfying and, very often, challenging. I was a member of Equity's Council, my trade union's governing body, for 14 years, three of those were as a Vice President. More recently I was the Speaker Secretary for Warrington Literary and Philosophical Society which enabled me to extend a lot of that previous experience into creating annual programmes.

In all of my work the skills of the designer have been crucial: this involves responding to a problem, exploring its needs and potential and then offering possibilities to colleagues. Discussion and further shared thinking follows which often involves serious listening and reflection enabling me to work towards a proposal for a production, a course of study or event which is rooted in its context and society and offers a vision for the subsequent audience or participants. In education I was also an external examiner and worked with a number of course validation teams. This now informs my work as an artist.

What is your vision for Humanists UK?

We need to expand our links and presence in the United Kingdom to ensure that our collective work and aims are as widely known and understood as possible. There are probably many people who do not fully appreciate what humanism can achieve and how vital this is in our current and future society. We need to continue to communicate this and to help build groups and networks of members who can contribute from all parts of society. Society is increasingly fragmented, humanism can help to counter this and reduce inevitable isolation. Our community has a strength and vision to bring to the wider community that it badly needs.

Roland Davis

Sex: Male

Age: 63

Ethnicity: White | British

Region: South East

Why should people vote for you?

I am a hard-working and passionate supporter of the humanist ideals of reason, respect, equality and empathy.

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

Since first reading Barbara Smoker's *Introduction to Humanism* as a teenager, I have been a passionate supporter of humanism, as a movement, as a way of thinking and a way of living. On the practical side, I support humanist causes, have conducted humanist funeral ceremonies and have experience of dealing with voluntary euthanasia within my own family. I am also interested in humanist philosophy, and have read a wide range of humanist thinkers.

I am a corporate finance professional with many years experience working with government on the procurement of new roads, schools and hospitals. My experience includes strategic planning, organisational change and dealing with complex negotiations and disputes, typically involving detailed risk and legal analysis

I have board experience at corporate level and from running my own small company as well as experience of teaching in the Open University and London Business School. I have served as a Parish Councillor and a trustee of my employer's occupational pension scheme.

My hobbies include writing, programming, gardening and weight training. I occasionally admit to playing not-very-edifying computer games. I have four humanist children.

What is your vision for Humanists UK?

Humanists UK is well run and does not require a change of direction. If elected, besides maintaining good governance and meeting statutory duties, I intend to support and encourage our excellent CEO and ensure that he remains empowered and motivated to pursue the mission. I believe all of the campaigns currently ongoing are important. I also believe the cause of rational thinking, independent of specific issues, is increasingly important as western society becomes increasingly divided and superstitious. However, I do not see humanism becoming diluted by covering the full range of worthy liberal issues that fall outside the humanist cause.

I believe there is potentially an enormous level of support from the silent majority in the UK and would like to see the organisation spreading its word more widely for example by greatly increasing the number of visits or presentations made to schools, and by seeking ways to add strength to our weight of numbers, for example by allowing people who do not want to pay to become members to register their support on the website.

Kate West

Sex: Female

Age: 43

Ethnicity: White | British

Region: London

Why should people vote for you?

A committed Humanist with solid financial, operational and HR management experience, ensuring high standards of governance across the non-profit sector.

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

I have 20 years' experience of working and volunteering in the non-profit sector. I worked for 6 years at the Charity Commission, initially as an advisor, helping trustees to resolve legal issues and advising on good governance, and later in the governance division, working closely with the Chief Executive and Board. I worked with the trustees of several large charities including Amnesty International and Oxfam. In 2008 I joined the charitable think tank 'Demos' as their Head of Operations, where I led a programme of change to professionalise its operations and governance.

As Chief Operating Officer of the Electoral Reform Society, I have completely overhauled the Society's internal procedures and policies. I've led governance reviews, introduced new Articles of Association, Byelaws and a code of conduct for the board, established governance and finance committees and led on the diversification and management of the Society's shareholdings in 2018. I also managed the sale of the Society's building in 2014, purchased a new site and led the project to construct a new 5-story home for ERS in central London.

I have also volunteered for several charities including the homeless charity Crisis and as a board member for Wikimedia UK.

What is your vision for Humanists UK?

My vision for Humanists UK is one where the charity is respected as a sector-leader, not only for its expertise and recognition as the leading national voice for the non-religious, but also as a model for good governance, compliance, and best practice. Where Humanists UK is fully supported, with the financial, operational, and human resources it needs to:

- **promote humanism** and continue the charity's vital awareness-raising work in education, events, and publishing, and to increase the number of people understanding humanism and identifying as a Humanist.
- **improve human rights and equality for everyone** through the charity's wide-ranging campaigns and policy work on essential issues including rights of asylum, assisted dying, LGBT rights, children's rights and freedom of expression worldwide. In particular, the extensive campaign work undertaken by Humanists UK in pursuance of a fair education system; from the abolition of state-funded

religious schools to the inclusion of humanism in the curriculum and an end to the legal requirement for a daily act of religious worship in schools.

- **increase awareness and numbers of humanist ceremonies** and the level of pastoral care and peer support work that the charity can provide, to help more non-religious people to live happier and fulfilled lives.

List of remaining Board members and their sex, age, ethnicity, and region

Iain Deboys

Sex: Male | Age: 64 | Ethnicity: White (British) | Region: Northern Ireland

Tamar Ghosh

Sex: Female | Age: 48 | Ethnicity: Mixed (White and Asian) | Region: London

Neil Hawkins

Sex: Male | Age: 57 | Ethnicity: White (British) | Region: Wales

Charley Jarrett

Sex: Male | Age: 35 | Ethnicity: Mixed (White and Arab African) | Region: London

Ruth Kaufman

Sex: Female | Age: 69 | Ethnicity: White (British) | Region: London

Neil McKain

Sex: Male | Age: 43 | Ethnicity: White (British) | Region: South East

Ann O'Connell

Sex: Female | Age: 54 | Ethnicity: White (Irish) | Region: East Midlands

Sophy Robinson

Sex: Female | Age: 67 | Ethnicity: White (British) | Region: South East

Andrew Russell

Sex: Male | Age: 35 | Ethnicity: White (British) | Region: London

Emma Shepherd

Sex: Female | Age: 47 | Ethnicity: White (British) | Region: Wales

Simon Walker-Samuel

Sex: Male | Age: 44 | Ethnicity: White (British) | Region: South East

Humanists UK

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

held on Sunday 26 June 2022, 15.30

at The MAC, 10 Exchange Street, West, Belfast, BT1 2NJ

Present: Frank Ashley, Jess Alexander, Emma Barnard, Christoph Beischl, David Bell,, Dermot Bolton, Noreen Brosnan, Tony Brewer, Neil Camp, Alasdair Chalmers, Michael Conlon, Andrew Cooper, Barry Coppinger, Christine Cowan, Adrian Davis, Maire De Buitlear, Iain Deboys, Laura Fitzsimons, Tamar Ghosh (Chair), Dawn Gyles, Christine Hackett, Val Hart, Michael Heap, Roy Heaps, Stewart Holden, Gerard Holloway, Charley Jarrett, Paul Kaufman, Laura Lacole, Karen Luckhurst, Charlie Lynch, Marilyn Marsh, Clare Marsh, Lynda McCleery, Mark McCleery, Emily McCullouch, Neil McKain, Bob McMillen, Mary Lou McShane, David Milne, Carol Milne, Alan Montgomery, Linda Montgomery, Kenneth Morton, Margaret Mulholland, Ann O'Connell, Eunan O'Kane, Guy Otten, Colin Partridge, Andy Pepperdine, Lynne Ramsay, Susannah Read, David Rees, Michael Rickwood, Rachael Rimmer, Jeremy Rodell, George Rodger, Amy Rodgers, Andrew Russell, Adam Rutherford, Rebecca Salama, Noel Scott, Eileen Scott, Imtiaz Shams, Nicole Shasha, Philippa Slatter, Maggie Smith, Sally Stephens, Graeme Ward, David Warden, Mick Wilkins.

Staff in attendance: Vicky Ball, Robert Cann, Andrew Copson (Chief Executive and Company Secretary), Sophie Castle, Luke Donnellan, Clare Elcombe Webber, Maddy Goodall, Guy Hirst, Alastair Lichten, Catriona McLellan, Iyabo Ojo, Ian Scott, Boyd Sleator, Georgia Sorrell (Minutes), Rachel Taggart-Ryan, Richy Thompson, Andrew West, Liam Whitton.

Apologies for Absence: Zahir Babar, Timothee Behra, Julie Collins, Peter Greenwood, Calum Irvine, Ruth Kaufman, Ciaran McWilliams, Christine Seymour, James Thomas.

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

Declarations of Interest: The chair reminded those present that members speaking should declare any potential conflict of interest in relation to any item. There were no declarations of interest.

Tellers: Iain Deboys and Jeremy Rodell were appointed as tellers and the Company Secretary as timekeeper.

Minutes of the AGM of Sunday 27 June 2021: On the proposal of the Chair, the minutes were approved *nem con*.

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

Chair and Chief Executive address: The Chair and Chief Executive reported on the past year's activities, highlighting Humanists UK's many successes and the hard work ahead. No questions from the floor were asked.

Elections to the Board of Trustees:

The five candidates for the Board of Trustees were approved by show of hands *nem con*. The following candidates were elected (in alphabetical order): Charley Jarrett, Ruth Kaufman, Fiyaz Mughal, Andrew Russell, Simon Walker-Samuel.

Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2021: John Adams (Treasurer) presented a report on the annual accounts to members. The Report and Accounts for 2021 were approved *nem com*. Questions from the floor were asked to the Treasurer.

Re-appointment of Auditor: Knox Cropper was re-appointed as auditor to hold office until the conclusion of the next general meeting where accounts are laid before the members, *nem con*.

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

Other Motions: The following statement proposed by the Chair was passed by a majority, with one vote against:

Statement on the policy of deporting refugees in the UK to Rwanda

From our work supporting humanist asylum seekers, persecuted because of their beliefs, we know the extreme difficulties faced by refugees in the UK. In seeking safe haven abroad, they suffer arduous journeys, deplorable treatment, and harsh conditions. Throughout this hostile process, they suffer with the uncertainty of whether their cases will be fairly heard and properly processed.

The UK Government's new policy of deporting refugees from the UK to Rwanda plainly makes their situation worse. For those asylum seekers we specialise in helping, who have already faced persecution on the basis of being non-religious, Rwanda represents an especially unsafe destination, and a potential site of further persecution and unfair handling of their claims. But the problem is broader than that.

This policy loses sight of refugees as human beings with human rights. Every human being has the right to life, the right to express themselves and to express their beliefs, the right to start a family and lead a normal life.

We want to see this dehumanising and immoral policy abolished and for refugees in the UK to have their claims for asylum assessed and resolved within the UK.

**BRITISH HUMANIST ASSOCIATION
(‘Humanists UK’)
Company Number: 228781**

Notice of the 2023 Annual General Meeting

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the 2023 Annual General Meeting will be held at *Liverpool Guild of Students, 160 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, L3 5TR* on 11 June 2023 at 15.30 to consider and, if deemed fit, to approve the following resolutions:

As Ordinary Resolutions:

1. To receive the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022.
2. To re-appoint Knox Cropper as auditor to Humanists UK to hold office until the conclusion of the next general meeting where accounts are laid before the members.
3. To authorise the trustees to determine the remuneration of the auditor.

Date: 13 May 2023

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

Registered Office:
39 Moreland Street
London
EC1V 8BB



COMPANY SECRETARY

Notes:

1. A member entitled to attend, speak and vote at the meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy, to exercise all or any of his or her rights to attend, speak and vote in his or her place on a show of hands or on a poll provided. Such proxy need not be a member of Humanists UK.
2. To be valid, the completed and signed form of proxy must be returned to Humanist UK's registered office no later than 17.30 on 9 June 2023. Lodging a form of proxy does not preclude a member from attending and voting at the meeting.
3. To be eligible to vote, you must be on the register of members of Humanists UK at 9.00 on 10 June 2023 and have no monies owing to the Humanists UK.

Humanists UK Form of Proxy

I, [insert name]

of [insert address]

being a member of the Humanists UK hereby appoint the Chair of the meeting or
[insert name] of [insert address]

as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf, as indicated below, at the Annual General Meeting to be held on 11 June 2023 and at any adjournment thereof.

Resolution	Resolution Summary	For	Against	Discretionary	Vote Withheld
1	Receive annual report and accounts for 31 December 2022				
2	Re-appointment of Knox Cropper as auditor				
3	Authorise the trustees to determine the auditor's remuneration				

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

Signed this day of 2023

.....
Signature

Explanatory Notes:

1. Every member has the right to appoint some other person of his or her choice, who need not be a member, as his or her proxy, to exercise all or any of his or her rights, to attend, speak and vote on his or her behalf at the meeting. To appoint a person other than the Chair please insert the name and address of your chosen proxy in the space provided.
2. To be valid this form of proxy must be signed by the member or his or her attorney and be sent to Humanists UK's registered office (39 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8BB) no later than 17.30 on 9 June 2023. Any Power of Attorney or any other authority under which the proxy form is signed (or a duly certified copy of such power or authority) must be included with the proxy form.
3. The 'Vote Withheld' box is provided to enable you to abstain on the resolution. However, it should be noted that a vote withheld is not a vote in law and will not be counted in the calculation of the proportion of votes 'for' and 'against' a resolution.
4. If you do not indicate as to how your proxy should vote or you tick the discretion box, your proxy will have discretion to vote on the resolution as they see fit. Your proxy will also have the discretion to vote as they see fit on any other business which may properly come before the meeting, including amendments to the resolution, and at any adjournment of the meeting.
5. The completion and return of this form will not preclude a member from attending the meeting and voting in person.
6. To be eligible to vote, you must be on the register of members at 9.00 on 10 June 2023 and have no monies owing to Humanists UK.