

**FOR A TOLERANT
WORLD WHERE
RATIONAL THINKING
AND KINDNESS
PREVAIL**

#Humanists2023

9-11 June 2023

Liverpool



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your phone



WELCOME

Welcome to Liverpool and to Humanists UK Convention 2023! I am thrilled to be here once again. I'll be introducing a few of our talks, and, along with other staff and volunteers from Humanists UK, I'll be here all weekend to meet and get to know you better. If you spot me, please don't hesitate to say hello!

For me, connecting with and learning from other humanists is a big part of what events like this are about. Our connections with others are one of the most important things that make us human. Add to that plenty of fun, some new discoveries, and the excitement that comes from encountering and debating new ideas, and you have the ingredients for a very fulfilling sort of life.

We have put together an impressive platform of speakers, entertainers, educators, and activists who will enlighten us on the various ways humanists are making valuable contributions to society, enhancing human understanding, and promoting happiness. As we approach World Humanist Day (21 June), it's a fitting time to reflect upon and celebrate the broader values of humanism - kindness, equality, rational thought, and our collective effort towards creating a world where everyone

can thrive and live the one life they have well. The experience will be all the richer as we celebrate in Liverpool, a wonderful, welcoming city that boasts a rich humanist history!

President of Humanists UK George Melly, a jazz and blues singer as well as writer and critic, was born in Liverpool in 1926. Living an ebullient and unapologetic life, and believing there to be just one, he revelled in his passions, embracing joys he felt were all the sweeter without any notion of an encore. He sets a perfect example for this weekend.

There's also Liverpool's first woman MP: Bessie Braddock, a trade union activist and politician who devoted her remarkable life to improving the lives of others. Polish-born physicist, Humanists UK patron, and 1995 Nobel Peace Prize winner Joseph Rotblat worked in Liverpool for many years, working on and later overseeing the cyclotron at the University of Liverpool. Rotblat devoted much of his life to the cause of peace and international cooperation, aware - through his own involvement in nuclear research - of the dangers of atomic weaponry. Let's not forget Olaf Stapleton either: philosopher and science fiction author, who spent his formative years in Liverpool, working for the



Liverpool Settlement and gaining his doctorate in philosophy at the University of Liverpool, before teaching for the Liverpool branch of the Workers Educational Association. These are just a handful of many remarkable Liverpool humanists!

Whether you have attended numerous Humanists UK events or if this is your first one, I wish you an enjoyable weekend. Members are also invited to join us for the Humanists UK AGM, scheduled for Sunday at 15:30, where we will reflect upon a year of great achievements and address new challenges.

By being here this weekend, you are actively supporting our efforts to create real and lasting change in society, where rational thinking and kindness prevail.

Andrew Copson
Chief Executive

YOUR TICKET

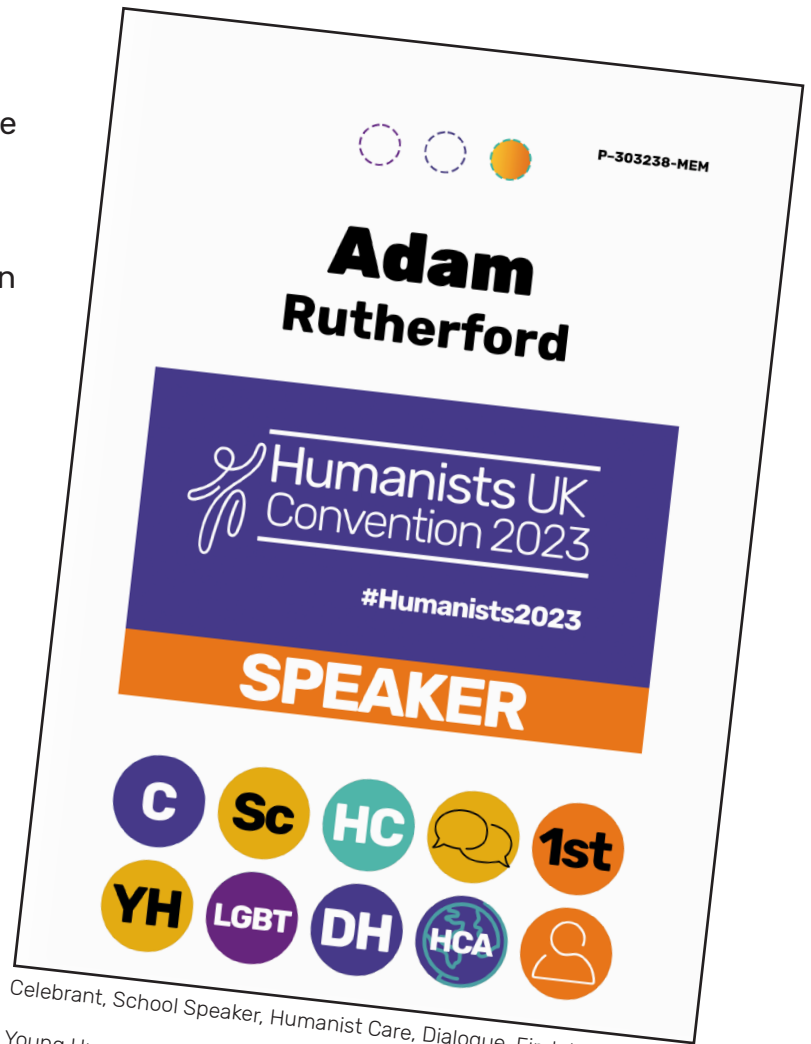
REGISTRATION

Register and collect your name badge at the registration desk in the foyer.

Registration for Humanists UK Convention 2023 is open from 18:00 on Friday, 08:30 on Saturday, and 09:30 on Sunday.

DAY TICKETS

We have been able to make Day Tickets available for this year's Convention, with badges marked as below:



Celebrant, School Speaker, Humanist Care, Dialogue, First-time attendee
 Young Humanists, LGBT Humanists, Defence Humanists,
 Humanist Climate Action, Attending solo



Convention ticket

Convention ticket-holders are welcome to join us at any talk or panel discussion throughout the weekend.



plus lunch

Join us for teas, coffees, and lunch on Saturday and Sunday.

Coffee is served at 10:50 and 14:50/15:00 on Saturday and Sunday.



plus dinner

Join us for drinks from 19:30 on Saturday evening, and for the Gala Dinner at 20:00.

There is no designated dress code for the dinner; come as you feel most comfortable.



plus lunch and dinner

Join us for teas, coffees, and lunches on both days, and for drinks and the Gala Dinner on Saturday evening.

FRIDAY

- 18:00** **Registration opens**
- 18:30** **Cash bar**
- 19:30** **Friday Night Comedy** **Mountford Hall**
Lee Peart, Alison Spittle, Hannah Platt, Robin Ince
- 21:30** **Welcome drinks (cash bar)**

SATURDAY

- 08:30** **Registration opens**
- 09:00** **Welcome** **Mountford Hall**
- 09:05** **Why humanism is the future**
David Voas, *Karen Wright*
- 10:00** **What do we misunderstand about energy?** **Mountford Hall**
Zion Lights, *Lori Marriott*
- 10:00** **The science of weird \$#!%** **Stanley Theatre**
Chris French, *Ann O'Connell*
- 10:50** Tea and coffee (Lunch ticket-holders only)
- 11:10** **Staying human in the age of AI**
Susie Alegre, *Andrew Copson*
- 12:00** Lunch (Lunch ticket-holders only)
- 13:00** **The future of humanism in politics**
Clare Delderfield, Neil Garratt AM, Tommy Sheppard MP, *Andrew Copson*
- 14:00** **How religion evolved, and why it endures** **Mountford Hall**
Robin Dunbar, *Neil Hawkins*
- 14:00** **Liverpool's humanist heritage** **Stanley Theatre**
Madeleine Goodall, *Luke Donnellan*
- 14:50** Tea and coffee (Lunch ticket-holders only)

SATURDAY

- 15:10** **Spies, sex, and the bomb: how MI5 came to watch humanists** **Mountford Hall**
Callum Brown, *Madeleine Goodall*
- Who cares: the hidden crisis in caregiving and how we solve it** **Stanley Theatre**
Emily Kenway, *Clare Elcombe Webber*
- 16:10** **Humanists UK changing society**
Steve Bowen, Kathy Riddick, *Karen Wright*
- 17:00** Close
- 19:30** **Drinks reception** (Gala Dinner ticket-holders only)
- 20:00** **Gala Dinner** (Gala Dinner ticket-holders only)

SUNDAY

- 09:30** **Registration opens**
- 10:00** **A history of black freethought** **Mountford Hall**
S I Martin, *Madeleine Goodall*
- 10:50** Tea and coffee (Lunch ticket-holders only)
- 11:10** **The generation myth**
Bobby Duffy, *Kathy Riddick*
- 12:00** Tea and coffee (Lunch ticket-holders only)
- AGM registration opens
- 13:00** **Inequality: the enemy between us**
Kate Pickett, Richard Wilkinson, *Iain Deboys*
- 14:00** **In conversation with Adam Rutherford and Andrew Copson**
Andrew Copson, Adam Rutherford, *Samira Ahmed*
- 15:00** Close and tea coffee (Lunch ticket-holders only)
- 15:30** **Humanists UK Annual General Meeting** (Members only)
- 17:00** **Drinks with board members** (Members only)

All appearances and timings are subject to speakers' work and other scheduling commitments.

SESSIONS (FRI/SAT)

Friday Night Comedy

Lee Peart, Alison Spittle, Hannah Platt, Robin Ince

Friday 19:30–Late

A fun, easy, social start to the weekend! The bar opens at 18:30, and comedy kicks off at 19:30. And why not stay for a few drinks with attendees old and new from 21:30?

Welcome

Andrew Copson

Saturday 09:00–09:05

Why humanism is the future

David Voas, Karen Wright

Saturday 09:05–09:50

Seven years ago David gave a TEDx talk entitled 'Why there is no way back for religion in the West'. It has been viewed 1.8 million times. Six months ago, he featured in a humorous video by YouTube personality Max Fosh, whose tale that 'I technically started the third largest religion in the country' has reached two million views. In this session, David will try to find the moral to this story in a whistle-stop tour of religious decline, social change, and the rise of humanist values. He will look at what the census and various surveys tell us about the state of religion in the UK.

What do we misunderstand about energy?

Mountford Hall

Zion Lights, Lori Marriott (Humanist Climate Action)

Saturday 10:00–10:50

Decarbonisation is technically not complicated – in fact, many countries have already achieved low-carbon emissions. So why do others lag behind? Did you know that the answer is poor decision-making where people have chosen ideology over science? This talk will cover the evidence behind what works, what hasn't worked, and the pitfalls we need to avoid if we want to meet climate targets. Be prepared to learn about 50 years of energy policy, how to slow global heating, and how misinformation has held us back from making the changes needed to save our planet.

The science of weird \$#!%

Stanley Theatre

Chris French, Ann O'Connell

Saturday 10:00–10:50

Opinion polls show the majority of the general public accepts that paranormal phenomena do occur. Such widespread experience of and belief in the paranormal can only mean one of two things. Either the paranormal is real, in which case this should be accepted by the wider scientific community which currently rejects such claims; or else belief in and experience of ostensibly paranormal phenomena can be fully explained in terms of psychological factors. In this session, Chris will provide an introduction to the sub-discipline of anomalistic psychology in an attempt to provide non-paranormal explanations in terms of known psychological and physical factors.

SESSIONS (SAT)

Staying human in the age of AI

Susie Alegre, Andrew Copson

Saturday 11:10-12:00

Amid all the hype around the threat of Artificial General Intelligence, we seem to have lost track of what it means to be human and the rights we need to protect our humanity for the future. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 75 years old this year, opens with the declaration that: 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.' These are the things that make us human and the rights to freedom of thought and freedom of opinion provide protections for our humanity – but are we losing them in the digital age, and how we can guarantee them for the future?

The future of humanism in politics

Clare Delderfield, Neil Garratt AM, Tommy Sheppard MP, Andrew Copson

Saturday 13:00-13:50

Join political figures from across the spectrum to hear their thoughts on how we can bring about a more humanist political system. Featuring Clare Delderfield, former councillor and Chair of Humanist and Secularist Liberal Democrats; Neil Garratt, Conservative Member of the London Assembly and co-host of the *Inside City Hall* podcast; and Tommy Sheppard, SNP MP for Edinburgh East and Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group.

How religion evolved, and why it endures

Mountford Hall

Robin Dunbar, Neil Hawkins

Saturday 14:00-14:50

When did humans develop 'spiritual' thought? What is religion's evolutionary purpose? And in our increasingly secular world, why has it endured? Every society in the history of humanity has lived with religion. Evolutionary psychologist Professor Robin Dunbar tracks its origins back to what he terms the 'mystical stance' – the aspect of human psychology that predisposes us to believe in a transcendent world, and which makes an encounter with the spiritual possible. Dunbar argues that this instinct is not a peculiar human quirk, an aberration on our otherwise efficient evolutionary journey. Rather, religion confers an advantage: it can benefit our individual health and wellbeing, but, more importantly, it fosters social bonding at large scale, helping to hold fractious societies together. Dunbar suggests these dimensions might provide the basis for an overarching theory for why and how humans are religious, and so help unify the myriad strands that currently populate this field.

Liverpool's humanist heritage

Stanley Theatre

Madeleine Goodall, Luke Donnellan

Saturday 14:00-14:50

Liverpool has a rich and varied humanist history, home to many prominent humanists as well as to organised groups of freethinkers for hundreds of years. In the late 19th and early 20th century, Liverpool had a positivist 'Church of Humanity', a thriving ethical society, and even one of only a handful of so-called 'ethical churches', led by socialist and suffragist Harry Youlden. Liverpool was the birthplace of a number of remarkable

SESSIONS (SAT)

humanists, including the city's first female MP, Bessie Braddock, and George Melly, jazz singer and former President of Humanists UK. Come along for a virtual walk through this vibrant heritage, and learn more about the wider history of the humanist movement, as glimpsed in the story of Liverpool.

Spies, sex and the bomb: how MI5 came to watch humanists

Mountford Hall

Callum Brown, Madeleine Goodall

Saturday 15:10-16:00

From the 1910s onwards, the British secret state – notably MI5 and the Metropolitan Police Special Branch – put many atheist scientists, writers, and journalists under surveillance. This talk explores the dangers perceived to rest amongst non-religionists – ranging through anti-imperialism, the bomb, and the threat of sex – and the ways in which the humanist movement tried to claim respectability. By 1990, the problem had shrunk as the Cold War ended, sexual freedoms grew, and being without religion was popularised and normalised. Being humanist is now less revolutionary than once it was perceived. But does it retain a radical edge?

Who cares: the hidden crisis in caregiving and how we solve it

Stanley Theatre

Emily Kenway, Clare Elcombe Webber

Saturday 15:10-16:00

In conversation with Head of Humanist Care Clare Elcombe Webber, writer and activist Emily Kenway will use in-depth research and the stories of real carers to explore what care is like today, and outline a vision for a better way forward. In this session she will draw from her book *Who cares: the hidden crisis in caregiving, and how we solve it* – recently selected as a finalist for the Orwell Prize for Political Writing.

Humanists UK changing society

Steve Bowen, Kathy Riddick, Karen Wright

Saturday 16:10-17:00

Join Humanists UK staff for an update on some of our most significant recent campaign achievements, including supporting a humanist to win a landmark legal case to let him sit on his local Religious Education committee, a case that will have widespread implications for the inclusion of humanists and humanism in public life. Plus, seize the opportunity to take part in our Convention campaign moment calling on the Justice Secretary to give legal recognition to humanist marriages in England and Wales!

SESSIONS (SUN)

A history of black freethought

S I Martin, Madeleine Goodall

Sunday 10:00-10:50

53% of adult Britons claim to belong to 'no religion' in the British Social Attitudes Survey. Of the 37% professing Christianity, a significant number are members of black-majority churches. The relative strength of Christianity in the black community, against the backdrop of steep secularisation in the population as a whole, means that much of UK churchgoing in 2023 is both prominently and recognisably black. Join S I Martin for an introduction to black freethought, black freethinkers, and their centrality to political and cultural developments across the African diaspora. As particular religious practices increasingly threaten human rights (and induce heightened cultural sensitivities), he also questions the relatively low visibility of visible minorities in atheist assemblies and highlights the need for diverse viewpoints in our communities.

The generation myth

Bobby Duffy, Kathy Riddick

Sunday 11:10-12:00

'Boomers are narcissists.' 'Millennials are spoiled.' 'Gen Z-ers are lazy.' We assume people born around the same time have basically the same values. It makes for good headlines. But is it true? Bobby Duffy has spent years studying generational distinctions. *The Generation Myth* is based on an analysis of what over three million people really think about homeownership, sex, wellbeing, and more. Duffy offers a new model for understanding how generations form, how they shape societies, and why generational differences aren't as sharp as we think.

Inequality: the enemy between us

Kate Pickett, Richard Wilkinson, Iain Deboys

Sunday 13:00-13:50

If we compare health and wellbeing in different countries, it's clear that some societies do much better than others. And the countries that do well on one measure, life expectancy for example, tend to do well across the board – with better health, better educational outcomes, better community wellbeing, and so on. Countries that do badly on one, also tend to do badly across the board. So what's going on? Surprisingly, it isn't how rich a society is that matters; it's how unequal it is that really counts. Inequality has always been regarded as divisive and socially corrosive, and now the evidence supports that intuition. This talk will explore the extent to which the question of inequality is central to meeting the grand challenge of creating sustainable wellbeing for everyone.

In conversation with Adam Rutherford and Andrew Copson

Andrew Copson, Adam Rutherford, Samira Ahmed

Sunday 14:00-14:50

Join award-winning journalist and Audio Broadcaster of the Year Samira Ahmed as she grills our President Dr Adam Rutherford and Chief Executive Andrew Copson, on the challenges facing humanists and humanist values, and how, together, we can seek to overcome them and bring about a tolerant world where rational thinking and kindness prevail.

SPEAKERS

Samira Ahmed is an award-winning journalist and broadcaster who presents *Front Row* on Radio 4 and *Newswatch* on BBC1, and was named Audio Broadcaster of the Year at the 2020 British Broadcasting Press Guild Awards. She won Stonewall Broadcast of the Year in 2009 while a presenter at *Channel 4 News*. Her documentaries include *Art of Persia* on BBC4 (2020) and *Disgusted, Mary Whitehouse* (2022). She writes a regular column in *New Humanist*.



Susie Alegre is an international lawyer, author, and speaker. She has particular expertise on tech ethics and neuroscience through the lens of human rights, bringing both legal skills and a background in philosophy to the key ethical questions of our time. Her book *Freedom to Think: The Long Struggle to Liberate our Minds*, which argues that only by recasting our human rights for the digital age can we safeguard our future, has been chosen as one of the *Financial Times*' Best Summer Books of 2022, and is longlisted for the Moore Prize for Human Rights Writing.



Steve Bowen is the Chair of Kent Humanists, a local partner group of Humanists UK. In 2023, he was victorious in a human rights legal case against Kent County Council, which refused his application to join the local Standing Advisory Council on RE because he was a humanist.



Callum Brown is Professor of History at the University of Glasgow, and the author of 14 books on the rise of humanists and the decline of religion. *Becoming Atheist* (2017) used oral history to examine people's routes from religion to humanism; *The Battle for Christian Britain* (2019) showed how conservative Christians feared humanists in the 1950s and 1960s; and *The Humanist Movement in Modern Britain* (co-written, 2023) showed how Humanists UK evolved with vigour from religious change. He is currently holder of a Leverhulme Research Fellowship researching the humanist impact on ethical change in Britain from 1930-1980.



Andrew Copson is Chief Executive of Humanists UK. He became Chief Executive in 2010 after five years coordinating Humanists UK's education and public affairs work. Andrew is also current President of Humanists International. He is the author of *Secularism: A Very Short Introduction* and, with Alice Roberts, *The Little Book of Humanism*, *The Little Book of Humanist Weddings*, and *The Little Book of Humanist Funerals*.



Iain Deboys is a board member of Humanists UK. He has worked in strategic planning and commissioning in housing and health authorities in Northern Ireland for 36 years. He has been the Commissioning Lead for Belfast in the NI health service for the past ten years, working closely with local communities experiencing some of the deepest inequalities in the UK. He has had various leadership roles in humanist organisations for 25 years and is a school speaker and the Northern Ireland Humanists lead for community development. He was integral to the establishment of Northern Ireland Humanists in 2016.



SPEAKERS

Clare Delderfield has been a member of Humanists UK and a humanist celebrant for 14 years, but a humanist since her early 20s. She is the Chair of Humanist and Secularist Liberal Democrats. Clare was a Liberal Democrat councillor between 2018 and 2022, and has led a number of successful election campaigns in Cambridgeshire. As a previous Chair of Governors of a Church of England primary school, which her children attended, she has a particular interest in religious influence in schools and the impact of the academies and free school program on secular education.



Luke Donnellan is the Director of Understanding Humanism, where he is responsible for promoting the understanding of humanism, especially in formal education settings. He manages Humanists UK's school speakers programme; teacher training and CPD; and the production of educational resources. He is the co-author of *Understanding Humanism*, writer and editor of the online courses *Introducing humanism* and *Humanist lives*, and writer-director of Humanists UK's recent short film with Alice Roberts, *One Life, Live It Well*.



Bobby Duffy is Professor of Public Policy and Director of the Policy Institute. He has worked across most public policy areas in his career of 30 years in policy research and evaluation, including being seconded to the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit. Bobby sits on several advisory boards, including chairing both the Campaign for Social Science and the CLOSER Advisory Board. His first book, *The Perils of Perception – Why we're wrong about nearly everything* draws on a set of global studies on how people misperceive key social realities. His latest book, *Generations – Does when you're born shape who you are?*, came out in September 2021 and challenges myths and stereotypes around generational trends, seeking a greater understanding around generational challenges.



Robin Dunbar is Professor of Evolutionary Psychology at the University of Oxford. He is a Fellow of the British Academy and of the Royal Anthropological Institute, and an elected Foreign Member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters. He has been awarded the Osman Hill Medal and the Huxley Medal. His popular science books include *The Human Story*, *How Many Friends Does One Person Need?*, *Human Evolution*, and, most recently, *How Religion Evolved: And Why It Endures*. They have been translated into a dozen languages.



Clare Elcombe Webber is Director of Humanist Care for Humanists UK, and oversees two of our programmes which support people. She manages our strategic work to make traditional chaplaincy services inclusive for people with non-religious beliefs, and manages the operational delivery of this through the Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network, which trains and accredits individuals to work and volunteer in institutions. She also oversees the work of Faith to Faithless, our programme supporting individuals who have left high-control religions and working to improve the policy and practice which impacts their lives.



SPEAKERS

Chris French is Head of the Anomalistic Psychology Research Unit in the Psychology Department at Goldsmiths, University of London. He is a Fellow of the British Psychological Society and of the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry, and a patron of Humanists UK. He has published over 150 articles and chapters covering a wide range of topics. His main current area of research is the psychology of paranormal beliefs and anomalous experiences. He frequently appears on radio and television casting a sceptical eye over paranormal claims. His most recent book is *Anomalistic Psychology: Exploring Paranormal Belief and Experience*.



Neil Garratt AM is the London Assembly Member for Croydon and Sutton and the Leader of the Conservatives in City Hall. Originally from Leicestershire, he moved to London to work in IT for an international architecture firm, a job which took him to Asia and North America in a heroic attempt to keep people connected and the data flowing. He is also a member of Conservative Humanists. Neil co-hosts the *Inside City Hall* podcast with fellow Assembly Member Nick Rogers, covering news from London's City Hall and the issues affecting the capital, as well as writing *Neil Garratt's City Hall Diary*, on Substack.



Madeleine Goodall is the Humanist Heritage Coordinator for Humanists UK, researching and writing about the history of humanism to celebrate the organisation's 125th birthday. She has a background in education, museums, and community history, and is also Humanists UK's Wikimedian in Residence. She currently leads on a two-year National Lottery Heritage Fund project – Humanist Heritage: doers, dreamers, place makers – which focuses on the remarkable freethinkers and activists who changed the world, and the communities they built around them.



Neil Hawkins is Chair of the Board at Humanists UK. A committed humanist with a strong belief in the values of kindness, tolerance, and freedom. Neil has spent 32 years in education, first as a teacher, then as a middle and senior manager, and then served for 16 years as Principal of Concord College, Shropshire. He now works part-time with a brief to facilitate high-quality education internationally. Neil is also Chair of Befrienders Worldwide, the foremost global network of suicide prevention and emotional support centres.



Robin Ince is many things: a comedian, an author, a broadcaster, and a populariser of scientific ideas. *The Guardian* once declared him a 'becardiganed polymath', which seems about right. He is probably best known as the co-host of the Sony Gold Award-winning BBC Radio 4 series *The Infinite Monkey Cage* with Professor Brian Cox. He also co-hosts the podcast *Book Shambles* with Josie Long, *An Uncanny Hour*, and *Science Shambles* with Dr Helen Czerski, all three of which are a part of The Cosmic Shambles Network, which he also co-created. His 2018 book, *I'm a Joke and So Are You*, was described by *Chortle* as 'one of the best books ever written about what it means to be a comedian'.



SPEAKERS

Emily Kenway writes and speaks about thought-provoking social issues. Drawing on a decade-long career working in social justice, from campaigning for living wages to tackling worker exploitation, alongside an MSc with Distinction in Social and Political Theory, she researches and writes about crucial forces shaping our lives and communities. As a writer of political thought, Emily has been published by *The Guardian*, *Independent*, *Huffington Post*, *Times Literary Supplement*, and more.



Zion Lights is a science communicator who is known for her environmental advocacy work. She is the founder of the evidence-based climate activism group Emergency Reactor and author of *The Ultimate Guide to Green Parenting*. Zion is also a leading speaker on clean energy, specifically nuclear energy, and also lectures on effective science communication, tackling misinformation, and climate action. She is the former editor of *The Hourglass*, Extinction Rebellion's print newspaper, and was previously the group's spokesperson for two years.



Lori Marriott has been the Coordinator of Humanist Climate Action, a volunteer-led network of Humanists UK members and supporters, since August 2021. She is passionate about promoting environmentalism within the humanist movement and putting humanist values into practice to tackle environmental degradation and the climate crisis. Lori has campaigned on environmental issues for many years, previously volunteering for the Green Party and several environmental NGOs. Lori recently spoke about our shared responsibility to care for the planet on a Faith & Belief Forum Earth Day podcast, and contributed to the *Understanding Humanism* textbook.



S I Martin works with museums, archives, and the education sector to bring diverse histories to wider audiences, specialising in the fields of Black British history and literature. He has published five books of historical fiction and non-fiction for adult and teenage readers. He has worked with and for the Black Cultural Archives, National Maritime Museum, the V&A, Tate Britain, London Metropolitan Archives, National Portrait Gallery, Horniman Museum, The National Archives, RAF Museum, Wellcome Trust, and many others.



Ann O'Connell is a Humanists UK board member. Ann is a committed humanist, sharing the Humanists UK vision of personal fulfilment found in our connections with others, and finding meaning in science, reason, compassion, and creativity. She is a trustee and treasurer of the Leicestershire and Rutland branch of Emmaus UK, a national charity which works to end homelessness. She is also a Director of Leicester Health Insight, a not-for-profit company which aims to facilitate improvements in health and social care for the population of Leicester.



SPEAKERS

Lee Peart is a comedian, presenter, broadcaster, and actor. He gigs at all the major comedy clubs across the UK including The Comedy Store, Komedia, The Glee Club, and The Stand, and has previously supported Jason Manford and Judi Love on their UK tour. As well as being the resident warm-up act for ITV's *Loose Women*, he has also warmed up audiences for some of the biggest shows on TV, including *Strictly Come Dancing*, *Britain's Got Talent*, Netflix's *Dance Monsters* and *Love Island: Aftersun*.



Kate Pickett is an epidemiologist who studies the social determinants of health and health inequalities. She is Professor of Epidemiology, Deputy Director of the Centre for Future Health, and Associate Director of the Leverhulme Centre for Anthropocene Biodiversity, and leads the Public Health and Society research group, all at the University of York. She is co-author, with Richard Wilkinson, of *The Spirit Level* and *The Inner Level*. Kate is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, a Fellow by Distinction of the UK Faculty of Public Health, and a Fellow of the British Academy of Social Sciences. She was awarded an OBE in the 2023 New Year's Honours List.



Hannah Platt is a stand-up comedian, writer, and finalist of the BBC New Comedian of the Year Award in 2019. Merseyside-via-Manchester's finest misanthrope has already been making her mark as a comic, having been described as 'a voice of a new generation' by *The Skinny* and 'a voice with something to say' by *Chortle*, never shying away from sensitive topics with brutal honesty and quick wit. Recently she has been commissioned to make a *Laugh Lesson* for BBC Three and written on *The Now Show* and *The News Quiz* for BBC Radio 4. She prides herself on her ability to take difficult and complex topics and turn them into sharp, refreshing gags.



Kathy Riddick leads Humanists UK's work in Wales as Coordinator of Wales Humanists. As well as representing Wales Humanists to senior stakeholders in the Welsh Government, she works alongside volunteers to ensure that the voice of humanists in Wales is fully represented in public policy discussions, Senedd debates, and in the media, and works to expand the availability of humanist ceremonies, pastoral support, and resources for teachers in Wales. In addition, Kathy works as part of the Humanists UK Public Affairs and Policy team as Campaigns Manager.



Adam Rutherford is a scientist, writer, broadcaster, and President of Humanists UK. A lecturer in Biology and Society at UCL, he has also written and presented award-winning series and programmes for the BBC, including Radio 4's *Start the Week*, *Inside Science*, and *The Curious Cases of Rutherford & Fry* with Dr Hannah Fry. He's written a number of books including *A Brief History of Everyone Who Ever Lived*, the *Sunday Times*-bestselling *How to Argue With a Racist*, and *Control: The Dark History and Troubling Present of Eugenics*, published in 2022. The children's book *Where Are You Really From?* is expected September 2023.



SPEAKERS

Tommy Sheppard MP has been the MP for Edinburgh East since 2015, representing the Scottish National Party. In May 2022, he was elected Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group, having been a Vice Chair for five years previously.



Alison Spittle is host of BBC Sounds' *Wheel of Misfortune* and *The Guilty Feminist* podcast, and a writer for *Have I Got News For You*. She's fresh off the back of a complete sell-out run at the Edinburgh Fringe, where she was voted to have one of the best-reviewed shows in the comedy section.



David Voas is Professor of Social Science at University College London, where he led the Social Research Institute until 2020. He has had senior roles in the European Values Study and various scholarly associations, and serves on the editorial boards of academic journals in his field. His research is mainly concerned with religious change in modern societies, based on quantitative analysis of large survey datasets.



Richard Wilkinson is Emeritus Professor of Social Epidemiology at the University of Nottingham Medical School, Honorary Professor at University College London, and Honorary Visiting Professor at the University of York. From 1976 onwards, his career has focused on research into social class differences in health, the social determinants of health, and on the health and social effects of income inequality. Early on, he drew attention to the tendency for a range of social problems to be exacerbated by wider income differences between rich and poor – a pattern which he first pointed out in a chapter of *Class and Health* which he edited in 1986 (re-issued summer 2022).



Karen Wright is Humanists UK's Public Affairs Manager and has held the role since 2018. Her responsibilities include managing the organisation's external stakeholders such as parliamentarians, civil servants, and other civil society relationships. She acts as Secretariat to the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group (APPHG), a cross-party group made up of over 115 Members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, of all the main parties, which raises the humanist voice in Westminster.





humanists.uk/join