

# British Humanist Association

## Annual Review 2014

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*human rights  
equalities  
outreach  
promotion  
education  
public affairs  
ceremonies  
pastoral support*



# I INTRODUCTION



These past twelve months have truly been an incredible time for everyone involved with the British Humanist Association, locally and nationally. We've seen a huge increase in coverage for our campaigns, and a record number of victories to report on in the space of a year.

On top of this, our work supporting teachers and pupils is going better than ever, our network of celebrants continues to grow, and through a robust management structure we've ensured continued quality control alongside growth. Similarly, our volunteer-led pastoral support programme is doing wonderful work, and is expanding from focusing solely on hospitals and prisons to include the armed forces as well.

We've had some of our most successful events and public lectures ever. Combined with some of the enormous growth we've seen in our social media visibility, we are finding and supporting more humanists than ever before, and more of them are supporting our work in public policy as well.

We're still a small organisation, but we cover a lot of ground. Thanks to your support, we've managed to achieve some great things, as you'll see in this Annual Review. As we move into an election year, we know that the challenges we face will only intensify, but with your support we hope to report many more big wins for the BHA and for everyone who supports our goal of a fairer society.

**Andrew Copson**  
Chief Executive

# The British Humanist Association is the national charity working on behalf of non-religious people who seek to live ethical and fulfilling lives on the basis of reason and humanity

Founded in 1896, we work with a network of over 30,000 members and supporters, as well as almost 100 local and special interest groups. These are the individuals who empower our work, who infuse it with energy and drive at every level, and whose commitment and generosity allows us to continue to make a difference in Britain.

Our policies are formed with the support of more than 150 of some of the world's most prominent thinkers and experts, including a number of scientists, philosophers, poets, novelists, and numerous academics. We seek to advance these policies with the help of more than 100 parliamentarians who are members of the All Party Parliamentary Humanist Group (APPHG).

## WHAT DO WE WANT?

- A world where everyone lives cooperatively on the basis of shared human values, respect for human rights, and concern for future generations
- To help non-religious people to be confident in living ethical and fulfilling lives on the basis of reason and humanity

## WHAT DO WE DO?

- We promote Humanism, work on behalf of the non-religious, and support those who wish to live humanist lives, including through the provision of humanist ceremonies
- We campaign for a secular state, challenge religious privilege, and promote equal treatment in law and policy of everyone regardless of religion or belief
- We offer a humanist perspective in public debate, drawing on contemporary humanist thought and the worldwide humanist tradition

## OUR VALUES

*In all our work, we strive to embody our values by:*

- Engaging in debate rationally, intelligently, and with attention to evidence
- Recognising the dignity of individuals and treating them with fairness and respect
- Respecting and promoting freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law
- Being cooperative, working with others of different beliefs for the common good
- Celebrating human achievement, progress and potential

## We aim to arrive at a situation where Humanism is understood as an ethical and fulfilling non-religious approach to life involving a naturalistic view of the universe

*This year we have extended our work with a number of organisations and networks.*

In education we are proud to support 155 humanist representatives who participate in their local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). We are members of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales, as well as Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education, and make regular contributions to *RE Online*, a support website for Religious Education teachers. This year we have also made links with new education organisations such as Big Heritage, an educational charity based in the north of England which aims to make archaeology accessible to people from deprived socio-economic backgrounds and areas.

### DIALOGUE

Our Dialogue Officer, Rory Fenton, led a two-hour session on Humanism at the Catholic People's Week retreat, and spoke at the summer conference of the South East England Faiths Forum and Faith in Sussex event *The Future in Their Hands: Young Interfaith*.

Additionally, in partnership with Theos, the National Federation of Atheist, Humanist and Secularist Student Societies (AHS), and the Radical Middle Way, we supported a 3FF (Three Faiths Forum) dialogue event featuring Harvard Assistant Humanist Chaplain Chris Steadman, discussing the topic of including the non-religious in 'interfaith' work and activism.

“A good world needs knowledge, kindness and courage. It does not need a regretful hankering after the past or a fettering of the free intelligence by the words uttered long ago by ignorant men.”

— Bertrand Russell

### JAMES HEMMING ESSAY PRIZE

In 2013, we awarded the James Hemming Essay Prize to Daisy Jones of Downe House School in Berkshire, which included £1000 in prize money provided by Conway Hall Ethical Society, books from us, and a free online subscription to *New Humanist* from the Rationalist Association, after her essay responding to this quotation from Bertrand Russell was selected by our honorary guest judge, philosopher Dr Stephen Law.





# EDUCATION

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## SCHOOL VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Since February, our Head of Education and Promotion, Sara, and a team of volunteer course facilitators have trained over 100 volunteers to assist teachers with planning and delivering lessons about Humanism. In the first few months since the programme launched more than 30 schools have requested a volunteer, inviting them to participate in sessions ranging from art lessons on the theme of death to debates on science. We have now reached over 2000 students.

## RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS

In 2014 we redesigned *Humanism for Schools*, our dedicated website for schools which provides free resources for teachers. We launched updated guidance on how to include humanist perspectives in lessons, new case studies highlighting best practice, and a facility where teachers can easily request one of our 100 trained volunteers to help plan and deliver lessons about Humanism. The website now has over 1,000 visitors a day.

## TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

We have delivered sessions on Humanism at six universities, reaching over 100 students training to become Religious Education teachers. We have also delivered a number of 'twilight' training sessions through local authorities and schools, increasing the confidence and competence of practising teachers.

## THE YOUNG ATHEIST'S HANDBOOK

We sent over 4,800 copies of Alom Shaha's *The Young Atheist's Handbook* to secondary school libraries in England and Wales thanks to generous donations from our supporters.

“ I consider it of utmost importance that our students are introduced to the full range of ethical and religious standpoints. Whereas the six main religions of our country are well represented on our shelves, I have found it difficult to find age-appropriate texts which cover doubt, agnosticism and atheism. This book goes some way to redress this imbalance. ”

– School librarian



# EVENTS AND LECTURES

*Between July 2013 and June 2014, we proudly hosted a number of public events, including our annual Darwin Day, Voltaire, Holyoake, and Bentham Lectures.*

Over 1,000 people attended the 2014 **Darwin Day Lecture**, in which Professor Alice Roberts uncovered the secrets of human life itself, exploring the early development of the human embryo and the secrets it contains about our rich evolutionary history.

The 2014 **Voltaire Lecture**, given by our President, Professor Jim Al-Khalili, was a roaring success. He and his audience toured the ancient Middle East at a time when it was the seat of the world's most advanced scientific thought. The event was filled to capacity at the historic Conway Hall, with more than 450 guests in attendance, and the video on YouTube has been viewed over 2,800 times.

Professor Anne Phillips gave a stirring **Bentham Lecture** at University College London in 2013 on the subject of *Humanism and the posthuman challenge*. She

looked at the terminological and moral problems posed by developments in cybertechnology and biotechnology, and looked critically at questions concerning what impact transhumanism might have on human equalities.

Our President, Professor Jim Al-Khalili, also delivered the 2013 **Holyoake Lecture** to a packed auditorium in Manchester. In particular, he looked at the forgotten legacy of scientists writing in Arabic, and the lasting impact the work of these scientists and scholars still has today.

We spoke at a variety of events to increase public understanding of Humanism. For example, our Chief Executive was a panel member on *The Big Questions* on the theme of *Is Britain a Christian Country?*; our Head of Education and Promotion took part in a debate at Cambridge Union on the proposition that *The Catholic Church is a force for Good*, narrowly winning in the final count by two votes; our Head of Public Affairs appeared on the BBC's *Sunday Morning Live* to discuss the segregation of children by religion in schools, and chaired a session on the rise of populism in Europe at the European Humanist Federation conference in Brussels; and our Head



of Ceremonies Isabel Russo has spoken at a number of local and regional events and meetings.

Birmingham Humanists, with our support, hosted the second annual **Blackham Lecture** titled *Towards a Theory of Moral Education*. The lecture was delivered by the University of Birmingham's Professor of Philosophy of Education, Michael Hand.

Our Head of Education and Promotion, Sara Passmore, appeared alongside our Vice President, Professor Richard Dawkins, as well as Professor Richard Fortey, Professor Richard Wiseman, and Quentin Cooper. A lot of Richards! It was a fun and informative event all to raise money for the Alfred Russell Wallace statue appeal.

CFI UK had an incredible twelve months, with a series of talks at the Oxford Literary Festival and the continuation of its successful programme of day conferences held at Conway Hall in Central London. Its expert speakers covered a range of topics, including the difference between science and pseudoscience; the psychology behind our cultural fascination with vampires, zombies, and witches; religiosity and atheism in both mind and brain; and the risks and challenges posed by global warming.

This year we also took part in a number of summer festivals. Our President, Jim Al-Khalili, and our Head of Public Affairs, Pavan Dhaliwal, spoke at the Hay Literary Festival and HowTheLightGetsIn philosophy

festival; Professor Chris French spoke at the Secret Garden Party in Cambridgeshire; and Jim, Professor Peter Atkins, and comedian Robin Ince all spoke at the Wilderness Festival in Oxfordshire. Our local groups have also held stalls at festivals and events around the country, including at local Pride events with support from Galha LGBT Humanists.

Shappi Khorsandi, Paul Sinha, Lucy Porter, Richard Herring, Stewart Lee, and Robin Ince performed at a sold-out show at the Bloomsbury Theatre in support of the World Humanist Congress being held in Oxford in August on the theme of *Freedom of Thought and Expression: Forging a 21st Century Enlightenment*.



We now have over 49 hours of videos including lectures, news appearances, and more available to watch on our YouTube channel at [youtube.com/user/BritishHumanists](https://youtube.com/user/BritishHumanists)



# SECTIONS AND GROUPS

## LOCAL HUMANIST GROUPS

Presently there are 40 partner humanist groups and 20 affiliate humanist groups in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Spain (providing support for expatriates). More than 8,000 of you are involved in local groups, organising events, book clubs, and social activities like walking weekends, as well as campaigning on important issues. Our Group Representatives Annual Meeting in London in October highlighted some of the great work being done by many of our members across the UK.

## NATIONAL FEDERATION OF ATHEIST, HUMANIST AND SECULAR STUDENT SOCIETIES

Our student section, the National Federation of Atheist, Humanist and Secular Student Societies (AHS) has grown, and now supports 46 student groups across the UK. This year they successfully launched a fundraising drive to enable them to grow more strategically and become financially self-sustaining.

## BRITISH HUMANIST CHOIRS

We now boast two British Humanist choirs. The newly formed Greater Manchester Humanist Choir launched in 2013 with an inaugural performance at the North West Humanists Regional Conference, and the London choir held its 'One Life in One Day' variety show on World Humanist Day on 21 June.

## ALL-WALES HUMANIST MEET-UP

We held our Inaugural All-Wales Humanist Meet-Up in June, with over 100 people attending workshops led by our senior staff to develop and extend our work in Wales.

## DEFENCE HUMANISTS

Defence Humanists is open to service personnel and their families, veterans, and civilian members of the Ministry of Defence. The group now has over 400 supporters. At its AGM in June, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Cummins was appointed Honorary President. This year, the committee is focusing on developing non-religious pastoral support for soldiers and veterans, and on the campaign for representation at the National Remembrance Ceremony in November.



galha

LGBT  
Humanists



Galha LGBT Humanists, which is our fastest-growing section, supports gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender humanists, and now has 1,216 members across the UK. It continues to campaign for equality and diversity and over the past year was at the front of the successful equal marriage campaign. They have held a number of successful events including a fundraising lunch with our Distinguished Supporter CJ De Mooi.

**We aim to arrive at a situation where people with humanist beliefs and values are supported in identifying themselves as humanists and in expressing those beliefs and values in their lives**

## CEREMONIES VIDEOS

This year we launched the final two videos focusing on Humanist Ceremonies™. All three videos are now available to watch on our YouTube channel.



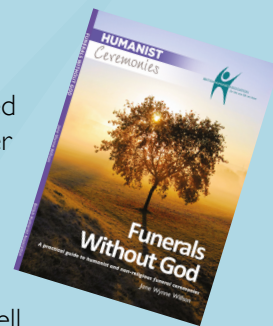
“ I want my wedding to be like my life, filled with family and friends. ”

## CELEBRANT TRAINING

Celebrant training is continuing at a rapid pace, with 19 wedding, 10 naming, and 25 funeral celebrants trained in the last twelve months. This puts our total number of celebrants active nationally at 282 — 253 take funerals, 260 take weddings, and 144 take namings.

## FUNERALS WITHOUT GOD

This May, we published the seventh revised edition of Jane Wynne Willson's best-seller *Funerals Without God*. It's an incredible resource: a practical guide to humanist and non-religious funeral services, full of wonderful poetry and prose readings, and now sports an updated cover design as well.



## PASTORAL SUPPORT

Our volunteer Head of Pastoral Support, David Savage, has been working with a number of volunteers and organisations to develop a robust training for those wanting to provide inclusive, non-religious pastoral support in prisons and hospitals. He is the first humanist to complete a two-year training course at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust to provide pastoral support. It is now a requirement for prisons to provide non-religious pastoral support on request.

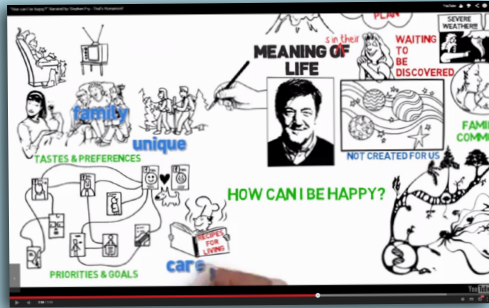
**HUMANIST**  
Ceremonies

“ I cannot let another day pass before I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the beautiful way you conducted my husband's funeral. It was truly so lovely and comforting. I know many, many people were deeply affected by the service, especially some who were a bit sceptical about a non-religious funeral. ”

## Our growing social media presence

*The past twelve months have been transformative for our online presence. Our various online channels have all grown in popularity, allowing us to be more responsive, reach a wider audience of like-minded people, and gain thousands of new and engaged supporters.*

### That's Humanism! campaign



In March we launched *That's Humanism!*, our enormously successful educational campaign that centred around four animated videos, narrated by our Distinguished Supporter Stephen Fry, on the themes of happiness, death, ethics,

and the importance of evidence. It led to record traffic to our social media after the campaign was picked up by national newspapers and popular websites, receiving over one million views in the first fortnight. Touchingly, various people of all ages and backgrounds wrote in to us to say they found the videos moving and helpful for them, or that they had helped them to learn more about Humanism and find a community of like-minded people in Britain, living their lives according to reason and humanity. Its long term benefit for our social media reach can't be undervalued either, promoting massive growth across all our channels.



### INCREASING OUR REACH

**Facebook:** In July 2013, the BHA had just over 27,000 Facebook 'likes'. By June 2014, this had risen to 65,000, and is continuing to grow at a faster rate than ever before.

**Twitter:** Today our Twitter account has more than 36,000 followers – a far cry from where we were a year ago, when we had just shy of 25,000.

**YouTube:** Our YouTube channel, to which we upload our lectures, public appearances, and special content, has also grown by leaps and bounds in the year, and now stands at over 10,000 subscribers, where in July 2013 we had slightly more than 6,400.

As well as covering all of the traditional broadcast and print media such as national and regional BBC, Sky News, ITN, *Guardian*, the *Times*, and *Mirror*, we also trended on Reddit, leading to over one million hits on our website in one day.



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

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*In the past year our media profile has been raised significantly with roughly 30% more coverage in late 2013 and a whopping 50% more coverage in the first six months of this year. This includes front page coverage in the Telegraph and the Times, appearances on Newsnight, the Today Programme, Sky News, The World Tonight, PM, Radio Five Live and every regional BBC radio show.*

## EUROPEAN HUMANIST HUSTINGS

We hosted a hustings for European Parliament candidates from the six biggest UK parties in the run-up to the elections in May to discuss the issues in Europe which mattered to humanists. 200 people turned up to grill the candidates on matters such as evidence-based policy, secularism, fracking, and women's and LGBT rights.

## WE ARE NOT A 'CHRISTIAN COUNTRY'

In April we responded to the Prime Minister's assertions that Britain was a 'Christian country' with an open letter in the *Telegraph*, with our President, Jim Al-Khalili, as its lead signatory, signed by 60 of our Distinguished Supporters. It was the first time the Prime Minister had so openly opposed secularism, in line with his Government's support of more religious public service provision. The story led to two full weeks of in-depth coverage in every national paper, with responses from the Archbishop of Canterbury, social commentators, and Cabinet Ministers, plus rolling coverage on every major TV news programme, leading to a nationwide debate on belief and identity in modern Britain.

## UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Our delegation to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva made dozens of strong representations on a number of issues before the assembled countries, including on the dangers posed by blasphemy laws; caste discrimination; violence against women; and freedom of belief as applies to the non-religious.

## BHA PRESIDENT ADDRESSES PARLIAMENTARIANS

Our President addressed a standing-room only All Party Parliamentary Humanist Group (APPHG) meeting in March on Humanism and our work. We also held a meeting on school admissions with Professor Ted Cante and members of the Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign to highlight the dangers of religious selection in schools. The APPHG put down parliamentary questions on issues from faith schools, remembrance, equality exemptions for scouts and guides, humanist marriage, and the plight of the non-religious internationally. 27 of our peers advanced the humanist agenda in a debate in the Lords on the contribution of humanists to British Society tabled by Lord Harrison.



This year we had over 1,000 parliamentary mentions — a huge % increase on the 20-30 mentions annually in previous years.



# CAMPAIGNS

*While a majority of the public supports our position on 'faith' schools, it has been harder in the past to get the media on side on the issue. However, the past few months have begun to show a slow but decisive turnaround. Our meetings with senior politicians and civil servants have been increasingly productive, and the coverage we've received in the media has also begun to show a subtle shift.*

## Fair Admissions Campaign

The Fair Admissions Campaign launched in June 2013, and has proven to be our most high-profile campaign since our Census Campaign in terms of social media and website hits. The Campaign is supported by 16 national groups, including a number we haven't collaborated with before, such as the Green Party, the Lib Dem Education Association, and Professor Ted Cantle (who is on the steering group).

### MAPPED: SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICIES ACROSS ENGLAND

We're big believers in the paramount importance of factual evidence to properly inform and to win debate. That's why through the Fair Admissions Campaign, we produced a detailed map showing all the secondary schools in England, explaining their admissions policies in detail, as well as just how socio-economically selective they were compared to schools in their local areas, and highlighting the worst offenders.

### BIRMINGHAM SCHOOLS INQUIRY

In January we were contacted by three whistleblowers, and passed on complaints about Park View School in Birmingham. This prompted the Department for Education and Ofsted to launch investigations into the school — inquiries which were subsequently broadened to other schools after the appearance of the 'Trojan horse' letter which dominated the news agenda. In April we assisted those whistleblowers in speaking out in the media about their concerns, including on *Newsnight*, with our Chief Executive also appearing on the programme. Through us they also spoke out on *ITV News*, *BBC News*, and in the *Sunday Times* and *Sunday Telegraph*. We were able to talk

about the concerns we have about religious schools and the religious influence seen over Park View. Leading on from the wider debate we have worked to turn the narrative into one on issues around religion in schools, and following a meeting the Shadow Education Minister backed our call for an urgent review.



## ASSISTED DYING: EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH WINS OVER VOTERS

We were the only organisation supporting what were arguably the most significant assisted dying legal cases of our times. The cases were heard by nine judges at the Supreme Court, (only the second time this number of judges have been called

“ True respect for life means respect for the persons whose lives are in question — refusing assistance, when their plea is settled and uncoerced discounts and demeans their personhood. We do not normally walk by when asked for help. ”

— Professor Blackburn

— the first being a case we were also party to!), demonstrating the serious nature of the issue. The cases were brought by Jane Nicklinson, the widow of Tony Nicklinson, who sought, and was repeatedly

denied, an assisted death, and Paul Lamb, who was seeking the right to an assisted death following his paralysis in a road accident. The appeals sought a ruling by the Court that current English law, which prevents assisted dying for the terminally ill or incurably suffering, is incompatible with the right to dignity and a private life.

Our evidence centred on dignity, autonomy, and self determination, and was supported by witness statements from prominent humanist philosophers Professors AC Grayling, John Harris, Richard Norman, and Simon Blackburn, and Distinguished Supporter of Humanism, writer and campaigner Sir Terry Pratchett.



Actor Julie Hesmondhalgh

The judgment dismissed the appeal but lead judge Lord Neuberger and others took the opportunity to say that they were looking to Parliament to reconsider the question of assisted dying in order to resolve what is a pressing public issue: the future treatment of people who have made a settled and informed decision to end their life, but because they are incapable, need the assistance of a third party in order to do so. The judgment also made clear that it would not be incompatible with human rights for Parliament to make assisted dying legal and that the fundamental principles to be discussed in such cases are to do with individuals' freedom of choice. We will be taking these elements forward in our campaign.

### CORONATION STREET ASSISTED DYING STORYLINE

One of our biggest moments this year was the ground breaking Coronation Street storyline in which cancer victim Hayley Cropper, played by our Distinguished Supporter Julie Hesmondhalgh, pleaded with her husband, Roy, to end her suffering by assisting her to die with dignity. After she died, Roy was visited by an accredited humanist funeral celebrant, introducing millions of viewers to non-religious funerals and our celebrants.

The storyline, which we advised on, was a ratings winner. National newspapers covered the story and Twitter was alive with positive commentary about the right to die, as well as about humanist funeral ceremonies.

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

### ‘TEACH EVOLUTION, NOT CREATIONISM’ — A MAJOR SUCCESS

Our ‘Teach Evolution, Not Creationism’ campaign achieved all of its objectives in June 2014. The Government changed the rules to preclude all Academies and Free Schools, both those that already exist and those that will open in the future, from teaching pseudoscientific ideas such as creationism as scientifically valid. The changes have been made through extending an explicit ban to all future Academies and Free Schools, but also by clarifying that the requirement to teach a broad and balanced curriculum means no existing Academies and Free Schools can teach pseudoscience either.

### OFQUAL U-TURN: NO MORE EXAM REDACTION IN SCHOOLS

After initially stating it would condone the practice of censoring exam questions in schools, as had been found to be taking place in Charedi Jewish ‘faith’ schools with science exam questions concerning evolution, we kept pressure on Ofqual and it soon announced the practice would now be banned at all schools and through all exam boards. A huge success!

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION GUIDANCE

In October, the Religious Education Council for England and Wales published its *Review of Religious Education in England*. The review included a national framework for RE lessons which puts non-religious worldviews such as Humanism on an equal footing with the major religions. The framework contains over 100 explicit references to Humanism. This is a huge achievement and sends a clear signal about the importance of learning about Humanism and non-religious beliefs within the Religious Education curriculum.

### GIRL GUIDES AND SCOUTS INTRODUCE REVISED, INCLUSIVE PROMISES

After many years of campaigning on the issue on 1 January 2014 the Scouts introduced a secular option to their Promise, enabling the non-religious to join for the first time. This followed on from last year, when we worked in partnership with the Scout Association to shape the wording of its new Promise, responding to their consultation and encouraging hundreds of others to do likewise. We also worked with the Girl Guides on their secular oath. This is another long-standing policy goal achieved this year.

## MARRIAGE LAW: SAME-SEX MARRIAGE AND HUMANIST MARRIAGE

We were delighted when the Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Bill received royal assent, in spite of pressure from religious lobbies, becoming an Act of Parliament. The first same-sex marriages followed in March 2014, and a number of couples also chose humanist ceremonies to mark the occasion. Our successful amendment to the Act also meant that the Government began a consultation on whether non-religious belief-based organisations could conduct legal marriages.

## LONDON ORATORY BATTLE OVER ADMISSIONS

We complained to the Schools Adjudicator about the London Oratory School's admissions policy, which gave preference to parents who supported the Catholic Church practically, and therefore was socially selective. We won our initial hearing where it was deemed the school would have to rewrite its admissions code. After a retrial due to an 'inconsequential technicality', we expect the same verdict again.

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION VICTORIES

We won a landmark case against the Department for Education, forcing it to disclose information in the public interest about which groups applied to open Free Schools during the sixth wave of applications, after they used numerous stalling tactics to attempt to withhold the data. Separately, the Information Tribunal ordered the Department to release two documents which helped form its policy on the state funding of pseudoscientific Steiner Schools.

## EXPOSED: STATE FUNDING OF CREATIONIST AND OTHER FUNDAMENTALIST NURSERIES

In March, we exposed 67 examples of the state funding private schools with alarming religiously fundamentalist curricula through a scheme to fund nurseries. These schools included at least 25 which taught creationism as scientifically valid. We also found that two nurseries were being funded which had previously been linked by David Cameron and Michael Gove to the Islamic extremist group Hizb ut-Tahrir. After lobbying, a consultation was published which we and hundreds of our members responded to concerning the state funding of creationist nurseries, as well as the religious 'independent inspectorates' which inspect private schools.



## SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

We received blanket coverage in the national newspapers, including the front page of the *Independent*, after we revealed that 46 schools still had Section 28-like statements in their Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) policies. The UK and Welsh Governments launched investigations and almost all of the schools announced that they would revise their policies. We have continued to call for statutory Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) including good-quality SRE as part of the National Curriculum. We submitted evidence to a Government Select Inquiry on the issue, and on the same day backed the launch of the 'SRE — It's My Right' campaign.

# We aim to arrive at a situation where we are respected as an organisation for our expertise and professionalism and recognised as the national voice of Humanism and a leading national voice for the non-religious and for secularism

## THE NATIONAL VOICE OF NON-RELIGIOUS CEREMONY

Our work on the humanist marriage amendment to the Marriage Act 2013 consolidated growing respect for the BHA as the leading national voice of non-religious ceremony, earning praise across both Houses of Parliament.

This was made clear during the week of Prince George's baptism, when we became the media's go-to organisation for talking points on non-religious alternatives, with our Head of Ceremonies, Isabel Russo, appearing on Radio 4. A representative from the Humanist Ceremonies network was invited on the BBC World Service to comment on the funeral of Nelson Mandela, to which we sent Caroline Black, a celebrant trained in all ceremony types.

Our Head of Ceremonies has also contributed to 'think pieces' in the national press on the subject of ceremony and belief, including the *Telegraph* article 'Have the British forgotten how to grieve?' and the *Sunday Express* story 'Death, religion and sexuality: How to answer your children's trickiest questions.'



## FREEDOM OF BELIEF

Our Chief Executive was appointed to a national Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life, as well as to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Advisory Panel on Freedom of Religion or Belief. We are also the only non-religious entity which is a stakeholder of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief, and continue to work with them to ensure that freedom of belief as addressed by Parliament continues to take into account non-religious people and non-religious beliefs such as Humanism.

## HEALTHCARE CHAPLAINCY FAITH AND BELIEF GROUP

We have now joined as an official observer of the Healthcare Chaplaincy Faith and Belief Group, through which we plan to expand the role of humanist pastoral support volunteers nationally. Our observer status in the group reflects the hard work of our Head of Pastoral Support, David Savage.



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

## **DIGITAL SECURITY AND FUNCTIONALITY**

Thanks to the vigilance of our ICT, Database and Web Manager, Andrew West, we have successfully responded to the online security threats of the past year, such as the 'HeartBleed' scare, and have undergone continual reviews and improvements to our online security. Andrew has also upgraded and expanded our phone and PC systems to meet our growing needs. Our switchover to the open source 'CiviCRM' database system was completed this year, meaning our data is now centrally organised, making for substantial efficiencies across many areas of work. We now run events, administer celebrants, and manage Local Groups communications through the database at no extra cost.



## **NEW STAFF: COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**

The past year has seen the creation of a new job role at the BHA, expanding our capacity and reach as a charity. Our new Communications Officer, Liam Whitton, handles, among other things, our social media and print communications, fundraising drives, copywriting, and graphic design output.



# Statement of Financial Activities

including the income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 December 2013

	Funds 2013			Funds 2012
	£ restricted	£ unrestricted	£ total	£ total
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>				
Incoming resources from general funds				
<i>Voluntary income</i>				
Legacies and donations	105,705	517,677	623,382	607,156
<i>Investment income</i>				
Rent and service charges	-	5,280	5,280	5,280
Dividends and interest	-	5,257	5,257	6,180
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities</i>	6,556	486,424	482,880	468,779
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>112,261</b>	<b>1,014,638</b>	<b>1,126,899</b>	<b>1,087,395</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>				
Costs of generating income	-	(134,894)	(134,894)	(99,857)
Costs of charitable activities	(128,502)	(822,347)	(950,849)	(1,092,566)
Governance costs	-	(7,205)	(7,205)	(7,542)
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>(128,502)</b>	<b>(964,446)</b>	<b>(1,092,948)</b>	<b>(1,199,965)</b>
<b>Net incoming resources/(Resources Expended) before transfers</b>	<b>(16,241)</b>	<b>50,192</b>	<b>33,951</b>	<b>(122,570)</b>



	Funds 2013			Funds 2012
	£ restricted	£ unrestricted	£ total	£ total
<b>STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES</b> <i>(continued)</i>				
<b>Net incoming resources/(Resources Expended) before transfers</b>	<b>(16,241)</b>	<b>50,192</b>	<b>33,951</b>	<b>(122,570)</b>
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	-	4,430	4,430	871
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	<b>(16,241)</b>	<b>54,622</b>	<b>38,381</b>	<b>(111,699)</b>
Unrealised (losses)/gains on investments	-	3,291	3,291	16,037
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	<b>(16,241)</b>	<b>57,913</b>	<b>41,672</b>	<b>(95,662)</b>
Balanced brought forward at 1 January	98,365	395,879	494,244	589,906
<b>BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 DECEMBER</b>	<b>82,124</b>	<b>453,792</b>	<b>535,916</b>	<b>494,244</b>

## PRINCIPAL STAFF

*Chief Executive* Andrew Copson  
*Head of Operations* Catriona McLellan  
*Head of Ceremonies* Isabel Russo  
*Head of Public Affairs* Pavan Dhaliwal  
*Head of Education and Promotion* Sara Passmore

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Cover photo: *Andrea and Amber*, by Robert Taylor

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