

AGM Business

Dorset Humanists
25th anniversary
1996 - 2021



Our AGM will be held online at 3.30pm on Saturday 13th March.
We need a quorum of at least 20 paid-up members in attendance.

1. Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Dorset Humanists is already recognised as a charity by the Inland Revenue but we are reaching the point where our income requires us to register with the Charity Commission. We are proposing to do this as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). A CIO is a corporate form of business designed for charitable organisations in the UK. CIO status is conferred by the Charity Commission on application by a charity, whether new or existing. The main benefits of CIO status are that it confers legal personality (the ability to enter contracts, sue and be sued, and to hold property in its own name rather than in the name of its trustees) and its members have limited liability (their liability in the event the charity becomes insolvent is limited or nil). A CIO only needs to register and file accounts and returns with the Charity Commission. This aims to reduce bureaucracy for the charity.

The committee is asking the AGM to approve the following motion:

"The Committee is authorised to submit an application to the Charity Commission to register as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)."

The committee is not proposing to do this immediately but wishes to be empowered to do so at the appropriate time. We will convene a future General Meeting to resolve to adopt a new Constitution and to authorise Dorset Humanists to transfer its funds to a yet-to-be created Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

Simon Whipple will be happy to answer questions on this at the AGM.

2. Constitution changes to be approved

We are making some changes to our current Constitution to improve our readiness to become Charitable Incorporated Organisation as detailed above. These are the changes which need to be approved by the AGM:

a) 'Mission and Vision' changed to 'Aims':

- i. To promote Humanism understood as a non-religious ethical worldview
- ii. To develop, and serve the needs of, the Humanist community in Dorset
- iii. To promote the public understanding of science
- iv. To be force for good in our local community and globally
- v. To support the work of our partners

b) Add affiliation to the South Central England Humanists Network [part of Humanists UK]

c) Add power to revoke membership

d) Increase upper limit for committee to twelve members

e) AGMs and EGMs may be conducted online

f) Finance: add "The committee has the power at its discretion to reimburse members, including committee members, for expenses incurred and to pay members for professional services"; and regarding annual accounts: "arrange for informal audit".

3. Nominations for 2021 committee and role of Chair

These members of Dorset Humanists have been nominated for (re-)election: **David Warden, Lyn Glass, Cathy Silman, John Kingston, Chris Street, Ronnie Barr, Susan Bryson, Dean Robertson, Simon Whipple, Phil Butcher, Daniel Dancey.** **David Warden has been nominated to continue in his role as Chair.**



New nomination: Daniel Dancey has been a member of Dorset Humanists since 2018 and he recently graduated from Bournemouth University in computer networking. He has offered to take on the vital role of Treasurer, following John Kingston's retirement from this position. He was treasurer for Bournemouth University Humanists and has a good understanding of accounting, having completed a course in this subject in addition to researching accurate methods of storing financial records as part of his degree.

Daniel says: *"It's great to be part of a community of like-minded people who enjoy talking about science, philosophy, ethics and all the other fantastic things we do. I'm very excited to be able to help as the treasurer, and I'll make sure to perform the role promptly and accurately."*

4. Authorise Dorset Humanists to buy food and other necessities to support Hope for Food, a local foodbank, up to £1,000

Partly owing to a big fall in our 2020 expenses (venue rental) Dorset Humanists has a substantial current surplus. In furtherance of Aim IV "To be force for good in our local community and globally", our Secretary Cathy Silman has proposed that we help support a local food bank. Cathy writes:



"This would help local people, many of whom are really struggling at the moment due to Covid19. In my work at Citizens Advice I come across many people who through no fault of their own are unable to live on benefits. A professional debt adviser at CA, a very able lady, who when she was left looking after two young children was living on benefits for a time. She said it was manageable if nothing ever broke and if she ignored Christmas and birthdays."

Hope For Food is a local organisation based in Bournemouth, set up and run entirely by volunteers. The organisation was founded with the aim of providing life's basic essentials on a day to day basis to people in need of help due to the current economic climate. They also aim to try and bring a little happiness back into the lives of people who perhaps, through no fault of their own, find themselves without things most of us take for granted, such as food and shelter. Hope for Food supplies clothing, toiletries, hot food, soup, sandwiches, fruit & veg, tea and coffee to the homeless 5 nights a week in Bournemouth. HFF also helps struggling families with food hampers, clothing, furniture and children's Christmas presents. They also operate a special van fitted with a washer and dryer, offering a quick clothes wash for the homeless.

Dorset Humanists Committee has done background checks on this charity and recommends that the AGM approves this proposal. www.hopeforfood.org.uk

5. Donate £100 to *Humanistically Speaking*

David Brittain, the Executive Editor of *Humanistically Speaking*, will speak for a few minutes about this grassroots humanist magazine which was launched a year ago and which is growing in popularity across the South and further afield.

Aims & Achievements 2020

We have achieved so much this year, despite the Covid lockdown! Paul Shears wrote: *“This is just a very sincere note of appreciation on the work that you do. I'm amazed that you and the other organisers are able to run a group of this quality. I cannot resist following the lectures and the follow-up conversations. It's all thought-provoking stuff and I am obliged to you and the team.”*

Aim 1

Promote Humanism understood as a non-religious ethical worldview

Aim 1: We do this through our continued existence as a local humanist group, through our online presence, and through our lively and well-attended programme of events. Our schools outreach has been curtailed this year but we have attended some excellent Humanists UK school speaker training webinars. Three of our members and supporters have joined the editorial team of *Humanistically Speaking*, the lively new grassroots humanist magazine. **307** people have subscribed to our YouTube channel and **842** people have joined our Meetup site. People from as far afield as **Southsea, Cardiff, Manchester, New York, and Calgary, Canada**, have joined our online events.

Aim 2

Develop, and serve the needs of, the Humanist community in Dorset

Aim 2: Our pastoral team has provided **47** hours of online and 1-1 support plus telephone support. We've hosted **69** online social events to help combat isolation. We've launched a new **Hardship Fund** to support members in financial difficulties. **Simon Bull** conducts humanist ceremonies.

Aim 3

Promote the public understanding of science

Aim 3: We continue to host events of scientific interest including virologist **Greg Atkins** on Emerging Virus Infections, Emeritus Professor **Norman Maclean** on The State of our Planet and its Wildlife, science advocate **Zion Lights** on nuclear power, astronomer **Bob Mizon** MBE on comets, and **Miguel Farias** on scientific research into the effects of meditation.

Aim 4

Be a force for good in our local community and globally

Aim 4: The activities of our dialogue group, **Out of the Box**, was suspended owing to the pandemic but we did host a number of online presentations including one on Islamophobia. We laid wreaths at the **Bournemouth and Poole War Memorials**. David Warden and Maggie Pepin serve on the Bournemouth and Poole **Holocaust Memorial Committee**. We hosted a talk by **Dorset Race Equality Council**.

Aim 5

Support the work of our partners

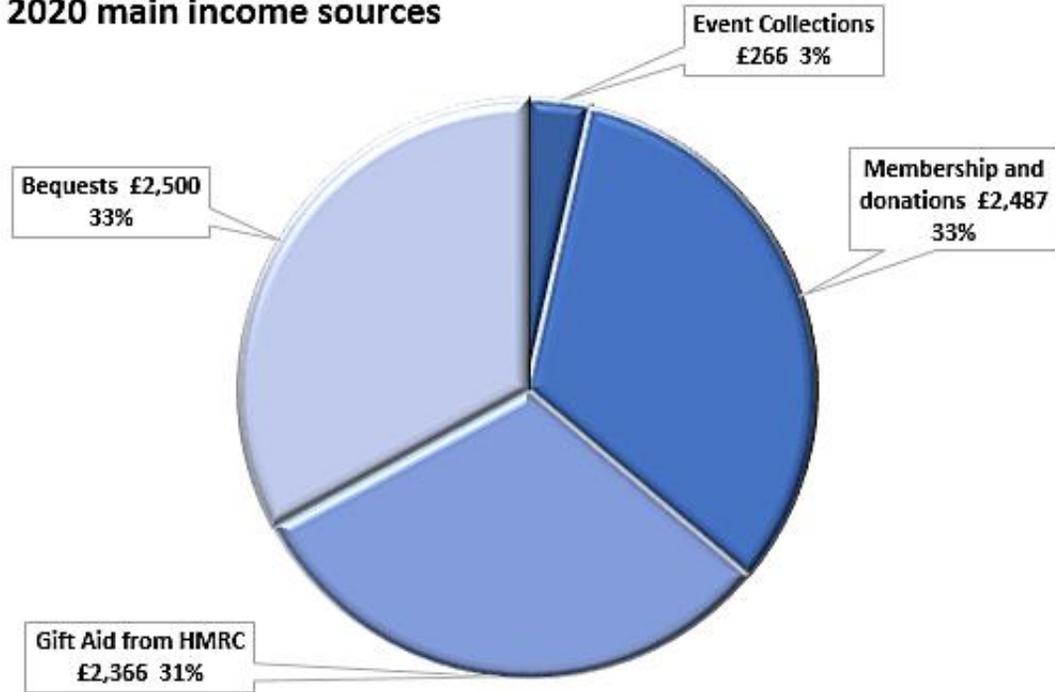
Aim 5: We pay subs to Humanists UK, the National Secular Society, Humanists International, and the SCEHN Network. We attended numerous sessions of Humanists UK's online conference in the Autumn and David Warden hosted a session on setting up a humanist choir. We hosted a talk by **Alastair Lichten**, Education Officer of the National Secular Society. The activities of **South Central England Humanists Network** were curtailed but its offshoot, *Humanistically Speaking*, could not have been a success without the energetic support of a number of Dorset Humanists members and supporters.

If you like what we do, please show your support and solidarity by becoming a member for an incredible £15 a year. 180 of you already have – thank you!

2020 accounts at-a-glance

Our treasurer John Kingston will present formal accounts for member approval at our AGM on 13th March. These indicative graphs are for illustration purposes only. If you would like a copy of the formal accounts please email jrd.kingston@gmail.com

2020 main income sources



2020 Main expenses

