



# The Case for Proportional Representation

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2.00pm at Moordown Community Centre,  
Coronation Ave, BH9 1TW**

## ***A talk by Paul Entwistle***

*Click image to RSVP*

Two momentous events have occurred recently, and have perhaps been obscured by other momentous events in the public eye. The Labour Party has now finally voted at its conference to embrace Proportional Representation, and the latest British Social Attitudes survey indicates that 51% of us now want PR. This is a mighty change from the days of the AV referendum held in 2011.

Recalling the AV vote, I believe that the public were very poorly informed or guided through the issues at stake. However the country may choose to proceed in future, I hope it will be through well-informed debate.

In this talk, I will outline what voters and Government (presumably) hope for from our Parliamentary voting system, and the extent to which that is currently being achieved. How does PR stand up in addressing perceived shortfalls under the current system? Could it make things worse? I hope to conclude that it is, indeed, *Time for Change!*

Paul studied economics and computing at the London School of Economics, and had a career in company finance and administration, mainly for U.S. multinationals.

He has become more interested in philosophy and political economy since retiring, and is a long-standing member of Dorset Humanists.

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## **Festive dinner**

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 7.00pm**  
**Marsham Court Hotel, 3 Russell**  
**Cotes Road BH1 3AB**

**Numbers limited! Closing date**  
**Monday 21st November.**



Join fellow humanists for dinner at the Marsham Court Hotel – contact Sandra Lucie-Smith on ☎ 07779 769108 or [sandra.luciesmith@live.com](mailto:sandra.luciesmith@live.com) to reserve your place and your 3-course menu choice.

The cost is £23 per person payable online - ask Sandra for payment details.

Partners welcome. Dress code: smart casual – festive wear optional. Please bring some cash if you would like to donate to our Food Appeal.

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 7.30pm Elstead Hotel, 12-14 Knyveton Road, BH1 3QP

# The Great Reset: Does Humanity need a New Economic Model?

*A talk and discussion led by Roger Mann – click globe to RSVP*

The economy, as ever, is a hot topic today as the government struggles to regain confidence, mitigate the energy crisis, help us cope with the cost of the living crisis, and keep us on track to reduce carbon dioxide. But are economic policies, both nationally and globally, helping or hindering? We have lived with the ups and downs of the current economic system for over 200 years. Is it time to ask whether the current system is fit for purpose and whether there are any realistic alternatives to the current system?

Roger's talk will present a critical analysis of the principles behind the current economic system, looking at the roles of the economy and its agents, the market model and the nature of money. He will ask if financial systems are enablers or a hindrance to increased prosperity and look at how the economy as a whole affects and influences the environment and socio-economic conditions.

Roger will compare alternatives from the World Economic Forum's 'Great Reset' strategy, as well as circular, doughnut, and resource-based economic models. He will review global concerns about energy consumption, world hunger, housing and the environment and the possibilities of doing better if people's needs were top of the priority list.

Roger Mann worked as an IT systems consultant based in the City of London. He has a post-graduate qualifications in economics and data analysis. He has also studied permaculture and been a trustee for five charities and worked on animal and humanitarian projects in Burma, Costa Rica, India, Portugal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

## Dates for your diary

Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> November 2pm	Moordown	Proportional Representation – Paul Entwistle
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> November 10.55	War Memorial	David Warden will speak at the Remembrance Service, War Memorial near the Town Hall, Bournemouth
Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 7.30pm	Elsstead Hotel	The Great Reset – Roger Mann
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> December 6.30pm	Black Cherry	A <i>Café Scientifique</i> event. Understanding emotional wellbeing with Dr Laura Renshaw-Vuillier. Link <a href="#">here</a> .
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2pm	Moordown	Geoff Kirby's unmissable talk on the history of sanitation from Neolithic to modern times. Plus seasonal songs and mince pies.
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> December 7.00pm	Marsham Court	Festive dinner £23.00. Book your place with Sandra Lucie-Smith at our events or phone 07779 769108. Limited places.

*Plus social events and more walks which will be announced on Dorset Humanists Meetup. Please check all events nearer the time in case of any venue changes. We respectfully ask you to take all reasonable precautions to ensure that you do not spread infection to others at our events. If in doubt, please stay at home. Videos are usually available later on YouTube.*



Our 2021 singing group after their triumphant return gig at Moordown

## Join our choir!

Our singing group, also known as the Hawkrigde Singers, is rehearsing seasonal songs every Tuesday evening from 1<sup>st</sup> November at Moordown Community Centre. If you fancy a bit of communal singing, why not join us? No auditions. Just enthusiasm.

☎ David 07910 886629



## David blings up for the Arts University Freshers' Fair

David joined Bournemouth University Chaplain Revd Ruth Wells to engage with students at the Arts University Bournemouth Freshers' Fair in October. His purple velvet jacket and paisley tie proved just the thing to attract attention from arts students. David is humanist advisor to the Faith & Reflection Team and he has just run a successful seminar for students and staff on the philosophy of friendship based on Robin Dunbar's book *Friends: Understanding the Power of our Most Important Relationships* (2021). Dunbar is an anthropologist and evolutionary psychologist at the University of Oxford.



Please donate to our Annual Appeal in support of local food bank *Hope for Food*. Last year, we donated £2,594 worth of food and toiletries to them.

Hope for Food works on a referral system from schools, social workers and healthcare workers for food hampers. Please contact David Warden for details about how to make a donation. Phone: 07910 886629

Email: [chairman@dorsethumanists.co.uk](mailto:chairman@dorsethumanists.co.uk)





# Humanist Schools in Uganda

*Twenty people joined us at Moordown Community Centre in October to hear Chris Smith's inspiring talk about her latest visit to the humanist schools in Uganda. We raised £284.90 in support of the schools. This is an abbreviated version of the talk based on her notes. You can listen to the whole recording by clicking the image on the left.*

Chris started her talk with a salutation in the Runyankore-Rukiga language: "Agandi, basebo, banyabo. Greetings, Ladies and Gentlemen!" The rest of the talk was in English. Uganda is a landlocked, 5000 foot plateau, with Lakes Victoria, Albert, and Edward. It's mostly above the equator, and often beautiful. Many roads are dirt, made worse by wet weather. From 1894 until independence in 1962, Uganda was a British protectorate. Its school system is modelled on the British system. Primary and secondary schooling are now compulsory. Government schools are supplemented by private schools with both day and boarding options. Many private schools have a religious affiliation.

In 2019, the Uganda Humanist Schools Trust (UHST) supported two high schools: Mustard Seed, north of Jinja and Isaac Newton, near Masaka. Mustard Seed is in a very poor area. School buildings are spread out, each side of a dirt road. Isaac Newton's site is on a hill, all purpose built, some on land donated by the director's family. Both had good exam results at 'O' and 'A' level. They ranked highly in their districts and even nationally. Infrastructure was approaching completion, including halls allowing registration as exam centres. Facilities such as water, power, kitchens, sanitation were all improving. They would attract more 'middle class' parents, able to pay fees and





**Kamyia Moses (Mustard Seed)**

could become self-funding, with some scholarship money. Kamyia Moses is the director and head teacher of Mustard Seed. Peter Kisirinya is director of Isaac Newton. They met at Makerere University and were involved in the Ugandan Humanist movement. They both wanted to start humanist schools. Steve Hurd, the chairman of the Uganda Humanists Schools Trust, knew them through working at Makerere. The other schools in this talk have similar stories. UHST supports but does not open schools – we are not missionaries. All the schools were started and are led by Ugandans. They are not for profit. Humanist, secular and rationalist values are propounded and all young people are welcomed equally. There's no distinction of religion, sect, tribe, or clan. Positive discipline is practised.

### **The impact of Covid**

As a result of the pandemic, all schools stayed closed – effectively for two years.

Scholarship money supported the teachers and other staff. Government learning materials were purchased and distributed by teachers.

Many parents are subsistence farmers and students worked the land or other manual work. Most found that they preferred study. There was social isolation and little opportunity to trade. Small savings were used up. There was an increase in physical and sexual violence, pregnancies and dangerous village abortions. There was hunger. And there was no government support.

A Muslim primary school near Mustard Seed and an evangelical primary near Isaac Newton went bankrupt. Locals asked Moses and Peter to take them over. Thanks to two generous bequests, UHST was able to buy the schools, start refurbishment, and retain many of the teachers. They will be excellent feeder primaries for the high schools. UHST's two schools became four.





The trustees agreed to support two more primaries, both in the west of Uganda. That made six. And there were urgent invitations to visit four others, making ten. Classical High proved a drive too far. We were able to visit Eagle's View, Star Classic and New Hope but supporting any of these is well beyond UHST for now. We do support a primary in Kasese with grants for books. Impoverished but high-attaining pupils can apply for scholarships to Isaac Newton. These have achieved very well and are good ambassadors for humanism. In 2022, a visit to all ten schools and a five day conference were proposed. Rest days and game parks were included. The conference is now proposed for January 2023. Our trip included tours of the site/s and buildings, lesson observations, meetings with board members and PTA, community visits, lunch, presentations, dances and speeches.

### Kanungu Humanist Primary School

Kanungu is in the far south west, near Bwindi, home of mountain gorillas. It is difficult to access, two and a half hours for the final 30 miles. **Robert Magara** was a schoolboy in 2000 when an 'end days' cult persuaded local people to attend church. The doors and windows were sealed, the building was torched, and 800 men, women and children burned to death. The cult leaders were not harmed. The first thing



**Robert Magara - Kanungu Humanist Primary School Director.**  
The school currently has 148 children and the biggest challenge is rapidly increasing food prices.

Robert noticed returning from school was the smell of roasting meat. As an adult, Robert opened a small secular school which was soon destroyed by heavy rain. His father donated better land. Other humanists were supporting Robert and UHST joined them with funding for buildings. In spite of Covid the main work was done, on budget and to plan. It opened in the second term of this year. This year was the first trustee visit.

### Katumba Primary School

With strong support from the community a young graduate, Irumba Juma, started running a primary school with a humanist ethos. The site, buildings and facilities were poor. Yet they achieved very good results at the end of Primary Leaving Exams. The trustees visited in 2018 and 2019 and reported to supporters. A single supporter gave the money for building on a new site. UHST helped rehouse a local lady and in exchange she gave the land which the community cleared and levelled. Katumba Humanist Community Primary School appeared, with the builders staying on site during Covid. More or less on budget if not exactly to plan.

# Humanist Schools in Uganda 'facing perfect storm'

*Appeal to UK Humanist Groups from Steve Hurd, Chair of the Uganda Humanist Schools Trust*

I should be most grateful if you could arrange for your group members to be informed, by email or through your website, of the Appeal we have mounted to help the Humanist Schools in Uganda. They are facing a perfect storm of crises due to slow post-Covid recovery, drought and high food prices, and high energy costs due to Russia's war against Ukraine.

The schools need financial help if they are to survive until local families can pay full school fees again.

Uganda Humanist Schools Trust now supports four more Humanist primary schools; two that we have built (both schools are in areas that have experienced huge strife) and two, former religious schools, that we have bought and turned into inclusive Humanist ones. Further work needs to be carried out to bring them up to scratch and to help them during their infancy to pay their teachers and other essential costs. For this, we need to increase our regular inflow of funds in order to make regular monthly support transfers to the schools.

Our existing supporters are already covering most of the costs, but if others in the Humanist community would help, it would make a huge difference. At the present time, the best way in which new supporters could help the schools would be by providing regular monthly payments through standing order or PayPal.

The focus of this appeal is to raise funds to help the Uganda Humanist Schools financially through to 2023, by which time we hope that economic conditions and school fee income will have recovered.



Finally, please convey my thanks to those of your members who have been supporting the schools through UHST. Many have done so for many years and they have opened up life chances for many young people in Uganda.

## School Reports

[Isaac Newton Humanist Schools \(Primary and High School\)](#)

[Mustard Seed Humanist Schools \(Primary and Secondary School\)](#)

[Katumba Parents Humanist Primary School](#)

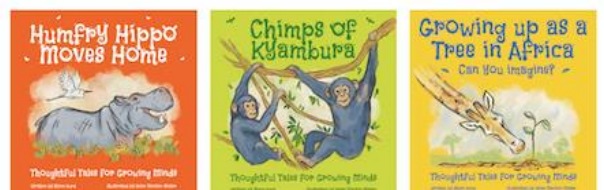
[Kanungu Humanist Primary School](#)

## How to donate

Details of how you may make payments to save these path-breaking Humanist Schools can be found on the [UHST Donate Page](#). All donations will be acknowledged and we will, if you choose, send periodic updates on the schools' progress. Updates are also posted in the [News section](#) of our website: [ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org](http://ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org).

## Buy humanist-themed children's books – all proceeds go to schools

Books [here](#)





# Letters & Emails

*It's your column...*

*From Steve Hurd, Chairperson of the Uganda Humanist Schools Trust*

We are very grateful to Dorset Humanists for their generous donation of £284.90 to help the Humanist Schools in Uganda. The money will go into our current appeal. The Uganda economy has been hit by low production and high prices due to the Covid lockdown and Russia's War with Ukraine. Families have been finding it difficult to pay the normal level of school fees so we have had to increase our monthly transfers to enable them to pay their teachers and buy school food.

I am grateful to Chris Smith for providing the group with an update on the situation in Uganda. As the economy picks up we hope to see the schools getting back on the path towards restoring their achievements pre-pandemic.

Chris mentioned you had some discussion about a Zoom meeting about the schools for readers of "Humanistically Speaking". That seems a good idea. I did one for the American Humanist Association, which seemed to go well and I spoke to the Unitarians in Newcastle under Lyme yesterday.

A big thank you to your group, which has been very supportive of the work of the schools over the years.

*Inclusive education based on reason, compassion, tolerance*

<https://ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org>

<https://humanstudies.education>

<https://www.facebook.com/ugandahumanistschoolstrust>

*From Eric Hayman*

The "Separating the Church from the State" meeting brought up some old and, because of a new sovereign taking the throne next year, some new questions. One being, had the pope granted Henry VIII his wishes concerning Catherine of Aragon, would there ever have been a Church of England? The 21st century separation argument might now be over the presence of Roman Catholic influence on the State instead.

It is no more rational to have bishops sitting in the House of Lords than it is to have a monarch. Nor is it that rational to have 650 people in the House of Commons deciding upon the lives of some 60 or 70 million residents in the United Kingdom. Especially when those 650 individuals have put themselves on candidate lists without a 'None of the above' choice. The current farrago over who should be Prime Minister would be laughable were it not so serious.

What surprised me at the meeting was Stephen Evans telling me that the National Secular Society is not against organised religion. From my own experiences with religious organisations (I was 'made a Christian' when I was baptised at a few days old; and have had a lifetime of being told I should be a believer), this attitude seems to be very one-sided. In fact the NSS tells us:

"We campaign for a secular state in which all citizens are free to practise their faith, change it, or have no faith at all. We promote secularism as the surest guarantor of religious freedom and the best means to foster a fair and open society, in which people of all religions and none can live together as equal citizens."

This implies that the NSS puts no bounds on what any religion demands; not just of its followers but of followers of other religions or none. I find this irrational for a society with 'Secular' in its name.



# View from the Chair

*David Warden*  
*Chairman of Dorset Humanists*



**T**he usefulness of thinking about politics and economics from a humanist point of view is that we're not constrained by tribalism and ideology. It doesn't matter whether a political or economic idea is from the 'left' or from the 'right', or whether it has been dismissed as 'trickle down economics' or 'crashing the economy'. The only yardstick that matters is whether it contributes to the building of a good society in which everyone can flourish. In the last bulletin I wished Liz Truss well with her ambition to get the UK back onto a trajectory of economic growth. Her gamble failed because you can't have a gigantic energy welfare programme, tax cuts, the Bank of England's bond-selling programme, inflation, and public debt close to 100 per cent of GDP all at the same time. But she should be credited with challenging some of the orthodoxies which have been failing for years – many of which have been pursued by unaccountable bankers rather than politicians. An addiction to ultra-low interest rates, quantitative easing, house-price inflation, government austerity, failure to invest, and ever-rising taxes is no way to run an economy. Jeremy Hunt is trying to keep this sick patient alive when what is needed is a radical rethink. Her 44 days in office, from appointment to resignation, represented an attempt to do that. My main disagreement with her is the continuation of mass immigration as a policy lever to stimulate economic growth. A growing population pushes up GDP as a whole and immigrants can contribute entrepreneurial and cultural dynamism. But the other side of the coin is failure to invest in the skills of home-grown young people and increasing pressure on housing and health services. An extreme outcome of mass immigration is sectarian violence between different religious communities, as we have recently seen in Leicester and other cities. If immigration is too numerous and too rapid, it can loosen our sense of belonging to a national community. Countries and nations are not anachronistic things to be thrown into the dustbin of history. They are living human communities of history, identity, shared values and obligations. It's not always easy, but we should love them as we love our homes and families, with all their faults and foibles.

Stephen Evans, chief executive of the National Secular Society who spoke to us in October, argued that disestablishment could help to facilitate "a strong and inclusive national identity – a sense of shared citizenship based around universal values". He's surely right to say "the fact that we have a national church is harmful to British identity" because it is out of step with reality. Queen Elizabeth and King Charles have made gestures towards pluralism and inclusiveness but the fact that church and state are tightly bound to one another is alienating to many citizens. I don't mind singing the national anthem because I know that God is as mythical as the magic dragon, but for many people the mention of God is problematic. I enjoyed the spectacle of the Queen's funeral but it seemed to take place in an unreal, fairy-tale world. The coronation will be similar. Our head of state should not be 'appointed by God' and crowned by an archbishop. European monarchies have modernised themselves. We could do likewise.