



Saturday 11th February 2023 ❖ Lunch at 1.15pm ❖ Talk at 2.15pm Moordown Community Centre, Coronation Ave, BH9 1TW £5.00 for members, £10.00 non-members (talk only - free)



Darwin Day Lunch with Emeritus Professor Richard Norman

Can Humanist Ethics produce a Political Programme?

ALMOST SOLD OUT. CONTACT LYN GLASS FOR ANY LATE AVAILABILITY.

Darwin Day is a global event which celebrates the life and work of the naturalist Charles Darwin who was born on 12th February 1809.

We are delighted to welcome Richard Norman back to Dorset Humanists as our distinguished guest speaker for our annual Darwin Day Lunch. His last visit to us was in 2012 so it's long overdue! Richard is Emeritus Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Kent. His work has been mainly in the areas of ethics and political philosophy. He is co-author, with Andrew Copson and Luke Donnellan, of *Understanding Humanism* which was

published last year by Routledge. He is also a patron of Humanists UK.

A delicious lunch (chicken curry, vegan lasagne, beef casserole, Eton mess, brownies, fruit & cheese, tea/coffee) will be prepared and served by committee members and volunteers. Tickets from Lyn Glass - email Lyn.glass@btinternet.com or see her at an event. Or phone David on 07910 886629.

Lunch is only for members and non-members who are attending the Darwin Day talk.

Wednesday 22nd February 7.30pm Orchid Hotel, 34 Gervis Road, Bournemouth BH1 3DH

The Philosophy of Friendship

How many friends should you have? Is it OK to have very few friends, or none at all? What do we actually mean by friendship? We now know a lot about friendship, based on anthropological studies. David Warden has led seminars on this topic at Bournemouth University and will share his findings.



Saturday 11th March 2023 ❖ 1.15pm Informal ploughman’s-style lunch ❖ AGM at 2.00pm
Moordown Community Centre, Coronation Ave, BH9 1TW. Please RSVP via Meetup or email.



Annual General Meeting & Lunch

*An important message from Vice Chair
Lyn Glass to all of our lovely members!*

Click image to RSVP

Dear members and supporters

This very sociable occasion precedes our annual meeting which is always a very lively affair. Our talented treasurer Daniel will give an account of our income and expenditure and chairman David will give his report of the year. He will also announce Dorset Humanists’ Humanist of the Year. It could be you! Members will elect the committee and chair for the next year and discuss and vote on any proposals. Please submit any proposals you would like to be discussed no later than Wednesday 15th February to chairman@dorsethumanists.co.uk.

Nominations for the committee must also be received no later than this date.

Dorset Humanists continues to be one of

the most successful humanist groups in the entire cosmos and several of our members are now regularly contributing to *Humanistically Speaking* which is a global grassroots humanist magazine. We promote humanist values (reason, rationality, living a good life etc.) and our schools team continues to speak to thousands of schoolchildren about the humanist alternative to religion. We raise thousands of pounds for good causes locally. Mary, the Operations Manager at Hope for Food, will give us an update about how our latest donation of £2312.38 has helped people in need.

If you’re not already a member, join us for just £15.00 a year!

Lyn Glass

Dates for your diary

Saturday 11 th February 1.15pm	Moordown	Darwin Day with Emeritus Professor Richard Norman: “Can Humanist Ethics produce a political programme?”
Wednesday 22 nd February 7.30pm	Orchid Hotel	The Philosophy of Friendship – a talk by David Warden
Thursday 2 nd March 7.30	Moon in the Square	Pub social hosted by Lyn. We usually sit on the ground floor on the right. Friendly conversion. Food available.
Saturday 11 th March 1.15pm	Moordown	Annual Members’ Meeting (AGM) with complimentary buffet lunch
Wednesday 22 nd March 7.30pm	Orchid Hotel	Ghostlore – a talk by Paul Cowdell who is a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Hertfordshire.

Plus social events and 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.



Humanist views on immigration

Twenty-three people attended our dialogue event at the Orchid Hotel in January about immigration. The event was chaired by Simon Whipple.

◀ [Click image to watch the video recording.](#)

David Warden argued for what he called the ‘Goldilocks’ solution to immigration: not too much, not too little, but just the right amount. His understanding of the Refugee Convention 1951 is that people can claim asylum by turning up in the UK if they are fleeing directly from a country where they are being persecuted. People are not ‘fleeing from France’ and he supports the government’s aim to stop dangerous channel crossings.

Aaron Darkwood argued that the UK is full, from a housing point of view, and that we cannot accommodate the current influx of immigrants unless we are prepared to build a new city the size of Birmingham every four years. Aaron spoke passionately, from personal experience, of how impossible it is to get social housing in this country. His argument was primarily about housing, but he also argued that, with the green agenda upon us, we need to be more self-sufficient in terms of growing our own food and importing less, more reservoirs, and more energy diversity.

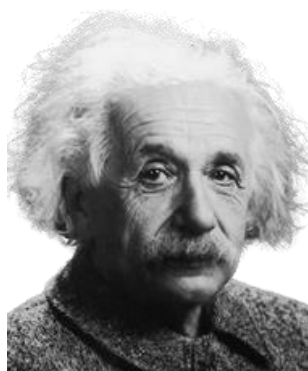
Cathy Silman said she understands that it is not possible to have unlimited immigration but she believes that the needs of desperate people are more important than maintaining our current way of life. She argued that trying to stop boat crossings to Dover may make things worse with boats landing further along the coast and asylum seekers then being used as slaves. She believes that a better, although by no means perfect, solution would be to increase the legal routes to settlement in the UK. Cathy

proposed that we create jointly, with other European countries, centres where people can stay whilst seeking asylum in different countries. We should also increase our contributions both of finance and manpower to the International Crime Agency to pursue globally the people who are offering, via social media, an escape to a better life which is, in effect, trafficking.

Daniel Dancey spoke mostly about economic migrants. He did not want to argue that we should let immigrants in to do the jobs we do not want to do or as a source of cheap labour. He said, “I don’t necessarily feel that I am allied to a British person who was born here more than to someone born somewhere else. This may be a generational thing - I grew up with the internet and a lot of my friends are from other parts of the world”. Daniel argued that we could get closer to Japan in terms of population density and still be quite happy. But if we are full, and need to reduce population, why target immigrants? Why not send unemployed people, or retired people, or disabled people to Rwanda. Daniel hastened to add, “I hope we don’t do that!” Another solution might be to fix the housing and infrastructure problems. Does immigration dilute our culture and erode our values? Daniel does not think so because culture is resilient and can be added to by other cultures. He thinks integration is a good thing. Who is more likely to fit in to this country? Someone who happened to be born here? Or someone who chose to come here and had to fight to do so?

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

Twenty-eight people attended a wide-ranging talk at the Elstead Hotel presented by Roger, a member of Dorset Humanists. This is a summary of some of his main points. Roger worked as a financial systems manager and developer and was a business consultant for small business and charities. He has taken postgraduate courses in economics, ecology and conservation and worked overseas on a variety of animal welfare and humanitarian projects. His beliefs include doing the least harm, equality and equal opportunities, and individual empowerment over power hierarchies. He considers himself to be a citizen of the world.



"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."
Albert Einstein

Global problems faced by humanity today are impacting individuals and nations rapidly. Climate change, famine, war, epidemics of deadly diseases and environmental pollution contribute to the long list of global challenges we, as humans, need to promptly address before an eventual catastrophe swiftly becomes inevitable.

Regardless of political philosophy, religious beliefs, or social customs, all socio-economic systems ultimately depend upon natural resources, such as clean air and water, arable land, and the necessary technology and personnel to maintain a high standard of living.

Modern society has access to highly advanced technologies and can make available food, clothing, housing, medical care, a relevant educational system, and develop a limitless supply of renewable, non-contaminating energy from geothermal, solar, wind and tidal sources.

It is now possible to have everyone on Earth enjoy a very high standard of living with all of the amenities that a prosperous civilization can provide. This can be

accomplished through the intelligent and humane application of science and technology.

Economic systems should be about:

- Effective and efficient use of resources
- Minimizing resource scarcity
- Maximizing potential

Capitalism and socialism are not mutually exclusive. The UK, US and really the global economy operate a mixed 'hybrid' economy. Both capitalism and socialism are rooted in the same problem.

"Business needs an unhappy culture to drive material desire and consumption."

There is a contradiction between business and technical efficiency. Business employs market efficiency (maximise extraction, production, distribution, turnover and labour employment) whereas technical or industrial efficiency means sustainable design, conservation, reduced turnover, labour efficacy, resource use optimisation, waste reduction – i.e., being 'economical' in the truest sense of the term. Business efficiency dislikes industrial efficiency. Being truly economical – getting 'more for less', maximizing longevity and facilitating conservation – is not what works for business. Business needs technological inefficiencies to ensure repeat purchases and a generally unhappy culture that drives material desires and consumption.

Inefficiency and planned obsolescence largely drive today's economic growth. Business only exists in areas where purchasing power exists. This explains why, in a world capable of vast productivity, poverty is still rampant.

Most money is created by commercial banks. In 2007, before the 2008 financial crisis, the 'outer balloon' of money was about 80 times government created money (the 'inner balloon'). Now it is about 16 times. Banks direct most of their lending towards property and financial speculation which pushes up house prices and makes financial crises more likely, i.e., they lend to the 'financial' economy rather than the 'real' economy. The amount of money in the economy depends on the mood swings of bankers.

Quantitative Easing is the central banks' own money creation scheme. When commercial banks are slow to react after a crisis it pushes money into the financial sector, pushing up house and bond prices. It does very little for the majority of people. The Bank of England's own research has shown that quantitative easing made the richest 5% over £128,000 richer. (Bank of England QE amounts to £875bn since the financial crash – DW).

We live in a debt-based society – money is created through debt. Total mortgage payments are typically 2.5 times the value of the property. Struggling families are literally feeding the monetary systems. In other words, it is the poor, poverty-driven communities that feed the wealthy. The poor create money, the wealthy accumulate it.

“No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable.” Adam Smith

Five Alternative Models

1. World Economic Forum

A not-for-profit foundation, based in Geneva. Klaus Schwab, chair and co-founder of WEF, with Thierry Malleret, wrote *COVID-19: The Great Reset* (2020) and *The Great Narrative for a Better Future* (2021). They viewed the pandemic as an opportunity to rebuild the global economy back better. They provide a critical analysis of the state of the world and recognise that we are at a crossroads between society becoming either more egalitarian or more authoritarian. Their Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) framework provides a set of principles to measure wider responsibilities. This represents a shift in the mindset of world leaders with a greater focus on the wellbeing of all citizens and the planet.

2. The Doughnut Economy

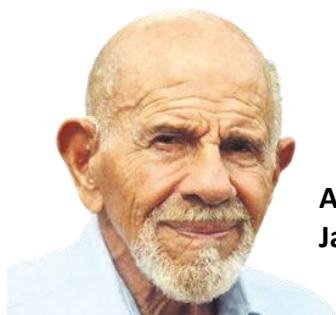
This is the brainchild of Kate Raworth, Senior Associate at Oxford University's Environmental Change Institute. The 'doughnut' consists of two concentric rings representing a social foundation (no one is left falling short) and an ecological ceiling which does not overshoot planetary boundaries. Between these two rings there is a doughnut-shaped space that is both ecologically safe and socially just – a space in which humanity can thrive. It's not a set of policies and institutions, but rather a way of thinking, changing the goal from endless GDP growth to thriving in 'the doughnut'.

3. The Circular Economy

The Circular Economy is an economic system that aims at zero waste and pollution. It's based on three principles, driven by design: Eliminate waste and pollution, circulate products and materials (at their highest value) and regenerate nature. It's underpinned by the transition to renewable energy and materials.

4. The Gift Economy

The gift economy is an economy in which there is no money, markets, not even bartering, but a completely communal sharing or giving of goods. It's the next step from giving, volunteering and crowd-sourcing. Various indigenous tribes have practised some form of gift economy for centuries. Its rationale is that humans are not naturally greedy and selfish. Greed only arises in times of scarcity, where the will to survive dominates. The modern industrialised world has created an artificial environment of scarcity. If this artificial scarcity was removed, it wouldn't make sense to be greedy – there would be enough for everyone's needs.



**American futurist,
Jacques Fresco**

5. Resource Based Economy

A 'Resource Based Economy' focuses on efficient resource management and quality of life for all. It posits that natural resources are the common heritage of all Earth's inhabitants and that through the application of science and technology humankind could reach extremely high productivity levels and create abundance to provide the highest possible living standard for all people on Earth. The term RBE was first coined by the American futurist and designer Jacque Fresco (died in 2017). RBE takes a scientific approach to identify the best ways to manage resources. It would develop collaborative and engaging communities and make all goods and services available to all without any system of debt or servitude.

Next steps

1. Education and knowledge
2. Increased democracy
3. Government empowerment, accountability and transparency
4. Decoupling of banks' power over the economy
5. Incentivize companies to do better in real time
6. Increase community empowerment
7. Resource Management Infrastructure Development

Further reading (selection)

The Great Narrative for a Better Future (2021) Klaus Schwab and Thierry Malleret

Doughnut Economics (2017) Kate Raworth

The New Human Rights Movement: Reinventing the Economy to End Oppression (2017) Peter Joseph

Moneyless Society (2022) Matthew Holten

Where Does Money Come From? (2017) Josh Ryan-Collins et al.

One-Straw Revolutionary: The Philosophy and Work of Masanobu Fukuoka (2015) Larry Korn

The Age of Consent: A Manifesto for a New World Order (2010) George Monbiot

The Crash Course: The Unsustainable Future of Our Economy, Energy, and Environment (2011) Chris Martenson

The End of Poverty (2005) Jeffrey Sachs

The Best That Money Can't Buy: Beyond Politics, Poverty, & War (2002) Jacque Fresco

Websites

[The Auravana Project](#)

[Moneyless Society](#)

[The Venus Project](#)

[The Zeitgeist Movement](#)

[Wellbeing Economy Alliance](#)

[Schumacher Centre](#)



Six candles were lit for the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis (including one million children) and the seventh candle was lit for all the other groups targeted for destruction, including gay men, Roma people, and disabled people. The figure is a replica of the new statue in Swanage of Dorset hero Trevor Chadwick who assisted in the evacuation of children.



David Warden took over from Maggie Pepin as the humanist representative on the Bournemouth & Poole Holocaust Memorial Day Committee. Maggie was presented with flowers and a gift in appreciation of her support for the event for many years.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Sunday 29th January at Lighthouse, Poole

Members of Dorset Humanists attended the Bournemouth and Poole Holocaust Memorial Day event at Lighthouse. Following in the footsteps of Maggie Pepin, David Warden read the pledge at the end of the event. The main speaker was ninety-three year old Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines MBE who was born in Prague 1929. She was on the last Kindertransport train that left Prague on 31st July 1939. She was one of the 669 children saved by Trevor Chadwick, a local hero who lived in Swanage and who helped to organise Kindertransport trains.

Photos © Karla Gowlett. Full gallery here:

<https://photoperspective.pixieset.com/hmd2nd023/>

View from the Chair

David Warden
Chairman of Dorset Humanists



I'm very pleased that we were able to tackle the difficult and divisive topic of immigration at our recent Orchid Hotel event. I thought that the speeches of my co-presenters were well-argued and respectful of differing views. No one defaulted to the common *ad hominem* argument that opposition to increased immigration is motivated by racism and xenophobia.

I think Cathy's position is motivated by a great sense of compassion and also by the desire to see greater equity in the world and global justice. Daniel had the perspective of a young person who has grown up with the internet and made friends across the world. Aaron's was informed by his first-hand experience of being at the sharp end of the lack of affordable and social housing.

Daniel argued that the UK could have the population density of Japan. I looked up the figure and found that Japan's is around 330 people per square kilometre and the UK's is around 270. Interestingly, the figure for China is 149 and for India it's 431. But sticking with the Japan comparison, we could have an additional 15m people which, to use Aaron's analogy, would mean another fourteen cities the size of Birmingham. Maybe our existing cities would just have to become much more densely populated. According to [UN projections](#), however, the UK's population will peak in 2050 at around 72m (that's just 4m more than today) but it would be interesting to know what their assumptions are. If it's true that hundreds of millions of people are seeking to migrate for economic reasons, and many more in the future because of climate change, this projection seems on the low side.

Daniel argued that culture is resilient and that British culture from, fish and chips to opera, will hardly be affected by immigration which will add to our stock of cultural richness. He argued, plausibly, that someone who had to fight to get here might in fact be a better fit than someone who happened to be born here. I hope he's right. Obviously, our culture has changed out of all recognition since the Second World War. Women have been liberated, gay people can marry, we are much more relaxed about sex and dress codes, religion has declined and so on. We still have some key institutions such as Parliament, the monarchy, and the BBC. Fifty years ago, we gave up Parliamentary sovereignty in order to join the EEC/EU. We recently reversed that decision, but half the population think that was a mistake. At the same time, devolution is pulling the UK in different directions.

For me, the key takeaway is that countries are not infinitely resilient to internal and external pressures. I prefer nationalism to imperialism and we should remember that Hitler, like Putin, was an imperialist. We should love our countries, not in a chauvinistic or exclusive way, but in the same way that we should love our families and our communities. They are part of what makes us human, and they can fall apart if we forget what holds them together.