



We all have one life to live, and one of life's greatest challenges is learning how to live it well. At Dorset Humanists, our purpose is to help people flourish by creating opportunities for friendship, thoughtful conversation and lifelong learning. Together we explore what it means to live a good life, drawing on the wisdom of the past and the best knowledge available to us today.

The name we give to this approach is humanism: a commitment to freedom of thought and expression, a rational and scientific understanding of reality, kindness, curiosity and human flourishing. Within this broad humanist framework we're free to think, question and disagree respectfully, guided by evidence, reason and shared experience rather than fixed dogma.

We don't offer ready-made answers. What we offer is space and time for discussion, dialogue and discovery together. This is the ethos behind all our events: good thinking, good conversation and the shared adventure of understanding what it means to be human. Our hope is that you'll find stimulation, friendship and a sense of belonging, whether you join us occasionally or become a lifelong member.

If you'd like to keep in touch with our activities, simply subscribe to our monthly bulletin via our website or leave your contact details at the welcome desk.

David Warden

Chairman of Dorset Humanists

Editor of Humanistically Speaking magazine

Honorary Member of Humanists UK

Joining is easy and affordable!

Dorset Humanists is recognised as a charity by the Inland Revenue (EW10227) and funded entirely by voluntary donations. If you enjoy our events and share our aims and values, please join us for a very affordable £15 pa (students £5). Members get special discounts on selected events and more say in how we develop in the future. To join us, pick up a membership form at one of our meetings, phone 07910 886629, or see our website.

Free Entry

Unless otherwise stated, entry to events in this programme is free to members and non-members alike, although we do appreciate an optional small donation of around £3.00 towards costs. Some events may attract an initial booking fee.

Parking

Moordown: Free on-site parking, including parking for Disabled Badge Holders. Additional roadside parking available nearby. West Cliff Hotel: Two hotel car parks. There's also quite good roadside parking nearby.

Refreshments

Some refreshments are complimentary. Otherwise, can be purchased in Moordown Community Centre café and the West Cliff Hotel bar.

Mailing List

To receive our free monthly magazine and regular updates, enter your email details on the website, or leave your email address at the desk.

Ceremonies

Accredited humanist celebrants are available to meet your needs for non-religious weddings, namings and funerals. Please see our website or leaflets on ceremonies.

Lending Library

We have a humanist lending library at Moordown Community Centre. Please browse and borrow books and remember to bring them back the following month.

Information

Please check our monthly bulletin and/or Meetup.com site for any changes to this programme. The views expressed by speakers/facilitators are their own and not necessarily those of Dorset Humanists.

Dogs

Only assistance dogs trained to support a disability are permitted at our speaker events. Dogs are welcome on our walks.

Venue addresses

Moordown Community Centre Coronation Avenue, BH9 1TW
Bournemouth West Cliff Hotel 7 Durlay Chine Rd,
 Bournemouth BH2 5JS
Moon in the Square 4-8 Exeter Rd, Bournemouth BH2 5AQ



Dorset Humanists Events

— Autumn 2026 —



Website: dorset.humanist.org.uk

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Humanists UK





The Inheritocracy Dilemma:

Family Loyalty or Universal Fairness?

Cathy Silman

Saturday 10th October 2.00pm *Moordown*

Most people feel a powerful instinct to leave any worldly goods they may have to children or others in their immediate kinship group. This drive may have an evolutionary basis, but is it compatible with a humanist concern for fairness beyond our own families?

Cathy will lead a friendly and interactive discussion focusing on this interesting dilemma. Should we be adding to the financial advantage of those who may already be doing well? Or, in doing so, do we further disadvantage those who have inherited little or nothing?



Dorset Humanists

30th anniversary party

Saturday 14th November 1.30pm *Moordown*

Join us as we celebrate 30 years of Dorset Humanists and our contribution to the civic and community life of Bournemouth and Dorset. We'll enjoy a generous buffet lunch, good conversation and friendship, with short reflections on our history and the future of humanist community. We'll also hear from some special guests and friends of Dorset Humanists.

This is a members and invited guests event, by RSVP only. Places are limited and advance booking is essential. To reserve your place, contact David no later than 31st October on 07910 886629 or chairman@dorset.humanist.org.uk



A Short History of the Mince Pie

and other tales from the Festive Kitchen – John Hubbard

Saturday 12th December 2.00pm *Moordown*

Why do we eat mince pies at Christmas, and how did our other festive food traditions come about? John Hubbard takes us on an entertaining journey through the history, folklore and changing tastes of the festive kitchen. From dishes whose origins stretch back centuries to the Christmas customs we now take for granted, John will uncover some of the surprising stories behind our seasonal celebrations.

A warm and entertaining way to round off the year, with complimentary mince pies and mulled wine to help us get into the festive spirit.



You Can't Say That!

Free Speech and its Limits

Thursday 22nd October 7.30pm *Westcliff Hotel*

Free speech is widely regarded as essential to a free and democratic society. But does that mean we should be free to say whatever we like? What about speech that offends, causes distress or is regarded as harmful? And who should decide where the boundaries lie? From controversial speakers and public protests to "cancel culture" and self-censorship, arguments about free expression have become increasingly heated. Drawing on humanist principles, we'll explore why free speech matters, when restrictions may be justified, and where we should draw the line.



How Can You Possibly Believe That?

Why Smart People Believe Stupid Things

Thursday 26th November 7.30pm *Westcliff Hotel*

We like to think our beliefs are based on reason and evidence – especially if we consider ourselves rational. But are they? Intelligent people can hold wildly different views about the world, passionately defend questionable ideas and believe things that seem obviously absurd to others. Why? We'll explore how evidence, emotion, intuition, experience, group loyalty and our existing worldview shape what we believe. And we'll turn the question on ourselves: are humanists really more rational than everyone else, or are we just as capable of fooling ourselves?



St Catherine's Hill Walk & Pub

Sunday 22nd November 10.15

Start from Avon Causeway

An easy and varied walk from the Avon Causeway, following the route of the old railway track before a gentle climb onto St Catherine's Hill. This sandy heathland ridge has a history stretching back thousands of years and rewards the modest climb with wonderful views across the Stour Valley towards Christchurch Priory. We'll return to the Avon Causeway pub, where those who wish can stay for lunch and a well-earned pint. History, heathland, views, good company and a pub at the end – what could be better? Full details will be on Meetup.



Sunday walks

Full details on Meetup.com

Our walks combine beautiful scenery with good company. Whether exploring Dorset's spectacular coastline, heathland or countryside, they offer a chance to enjoy gentle exercise, friendly conversation and a welcome break from the pressures of everyday life. Walking in nature is known to benefit both physical and mental wellbeing, making our walks a relaxed and enjoyable way to make friends, discover new places and appreciate our wonderful landscapes.



First Thursday pub socials

Details on Meetup.com

Our pub social is on the first Thursday of the month at Moon in the Square. We usually find a table on the ground floor on the right-hand side as you enter. No set agenda. Just turn up and chat! Food is available and drinks are reasonably priced. From 7.30pm until whenever you like.

Thursday 1st October, Thursday 5th November, Thursday 3rd December. Please check on Meetup for any changes.



Third Friday hotel socials

Details on Meetup.com

If you're less keen on venturing into the town centre, why not come along to the West Cliff Hotel on a Friday evening to enjoy friendly conversation and drinks in the hotel bar? These socials are hosted by committee members Sandra Lucie-Smith or Lyn Glass. Please note that bar prices are a bit higher than Wetherspoons. Friday 16th October 7.30pm, Friday 20th November 7.30pm.

Details correct at the time of printing. Please check the latest bulletin and especially Meetup.com for any changes to this programme.