

**British Humanist Association, operating as:**



**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED**

**31 December 2022**

**Company Number: 00228781**

**Charity Number: 285987**

# Humanists UK

## Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

The Board (who are the Directors of the Company and the Trustees of the Charity) presents its annual report along with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2022 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

### Legal and Administrative Details

Status	The British Humanist Association (Humanists UK) originated as the Union of Ethical Societies in 1896, was incorporated as the Ethical Union in 1928 and became the British Humanist Association in 1967. Its working name became Humanists UK in 2017. It is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 14 March 1928. Its governing instrument is its Articles of Association, adopted on 23 July 2011.			
	Company number:	00228781	Charity number:	285987
Registered office	39 Moreland Street, London, EC1V 8BB			
Honorary officers	Chair:	Neil Hawkins (from 27 June) Tamar Ghosh (to 26 June)		
	Vice Chair:	Neil McKain (from 27 June) Ann O’Connell (to 26 June)		
	Treasurer:	Ann O’Connell (from 27 June) John Adams (to 26 June)		
Other Board members	Iain Deboys	Sophy Robinson		
	Tamar Ghosh	Jeremy Rodell (to 26 June)		
	Charley Jarrett (from 26 June)	Andrew Russell (from 26 June)		

	Ruth Kaufman	Imtiaz Shams (to 26 June)
	Ewan Main	Emma Shepherd
	Neil McKain	Simon Walker-Samuel (from 26 June)
	Stephanie Niven	Hamza bin Walayat (to 22 June)
President	Professor Alice Roberts (to 31 May 2022)  Dr Adam Rutherford (from 1 June 2022)	
Principal staff	Chief Executive:	Andrew Copson
	Director of Ceremonies:	Deborah Hooper
	Director of Communications & Development:	Liam Whitton
	Director of IT:	Andrew West
	Director of Operations:	Catriona McLellan
	Director of Public Affairs & Policy:	Richy Thompson
	Director of Understanding Humanism:	Luke Donnellan
	Head of Humanist Care:	Clare Elcombe Webber
	Head of People:	Vicky Jones (to 28 October 2022)  Ann-Michelle Burton (from 1 November 2022)
Auditors	Knox Cropper LLP, Chartered Accountants 65 Leadenhall Street, London, EC3A 2AD	
Bankers	The Co-Operative Bank plc 118-120 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 3BA	
Investment Managers	Barclays Wealth 23 Lower Brook Street, Ipswich, IP14 1AQ	

	BNY Mellon Fund Managers Ltd, PO Box 336, Darlington, DL1 9RF
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## **Mission**

By advancing the humanist approach to life, we inspire and support non-religious people to be happy, confident, and ethical, and we work with them for a better society.

## **Charitable Objects**

Humanists UK's Objects are: 'The advancement of Humanism, namely a non-religious ethical life stance, the essential elements of which are a commitment to human wellbeing and a reliance on reason, experience and a naturalistic view of the world; the advancement of education and in particular the study of and the dissemination of knowledge about Humanism and about the arts and science as they relate to Humanism; the promotion of equality and non-discrimination and the protection of human rights as defined in international instruments to which the United Kingdom is party, in each case in particular as relates to religion and belief; the promotion of understanding between people holding religious and non-religious beliefs so as to advance harmonious cooperation in society.'

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

### **Organisational structure**

The Board meets regularly during the year and at the beginning of each meeting members are requested to declare any conflicts of interest. These are detailed in notes 17 and 22 of the financial statements.

The Board reviews its performance and skills annually and new members are recruited to meet any needs or gaps identified.

The day to day management of the Association is delegated to its key management personnel as detailed in note 8 to the financial statements. Remuneration of the Chief Executive is set by the Board. Remuneration of other key management personnel is delegated to the Chief Executive.

### **Method used to recruit and appoint new Board members**

Board members are recruited by election or by appointment, as set out in the Byelaws. Co-options until the next election can be made to fill vacancies arising among the elected Board members.

### **Induction and training of new Board members**

New Board members are provided with a Trustee Handbook which contains information about their role and responsibilities as recommended by the Charity

Commission. This includes: the trustee role description and personal specification relevant to the role, the Association's confidentiality policy and the eligibility requirements for becoming a trustee, and a Code of Conduct. They are also supplied with a copy of the Articles of Association. Induction meetings covering the background to current matters take place with the Vice-Chair, the Chief Executive and key members of the staff team. Training on matters relevant to the role and responsibilities of Board members is encouraged and the Board subscribes to literature pertinent to good governance.

## **Public benefit**

The Board has satisfied itself that Humanists UK's activities are compliant with law and guidance for charities on public benefit. The trustees confirm that when deciding on the activities of the charity they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

The five principal areas of work (which overlap and reinforce each other) are:

- Education of the public about Humanism, providing a moral framework for the non-religious. We seek to ensure that everyone has access to information about humanist approaches to ethical issues and about the humanist tradition. We deliver this education through our website, public lectures, and teaching materials for use in schools, and in many other ways;
- The provision of non-religious or humanist celebrants, so helping to meet a growing demand from the public for baby-naming, marriage and (especially) funeral ceremonies that accord with their own beliefs. Our aim is that all those who want a humanist ceremony should have access to one;
- The provision of humanist pastoral care to the non-religious in settings where religious people have the support of chaplains, for example in prisons and healthcare;
- Seeking to protect the human rights of humanists and other non-religious people and to combat the discrimination and disadvantages they encounter. We do this by working for compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998, especially insofar as it forbids discrimination by public authorities on grounds of religion or belief, and by making representations to Government and others, including sometimes addressing the need for changes in the law, and by promoting a secular state;
- Supporting local humanist groups and the positive contribution of humanists to building a harmonious, plural society.

While the principal beneficiaries of the Association's work are humanists and other people who have non-religious beliefs, the Board considers that the whole public benefits from our promotion of human rights and non-discrimination and from the wide range of information and educational material we offer. Our website is available to all and so are our lectures, subject on occasion to an admission fee.

## Report on progress towards our five Outcomes

By advancing the humanist approach to life, we inspire and support non-religious people to be happy, confident, and ethical, and we work with them for a better society.

Below, we report on our activity over the course of the year, against the five Outcomes set by the Board as our strategy.

### **1. More people knowing what humanism is and more non-religious people with humanist beliefs and values recognising themselves as humanists**

We continued to develop our various educational programmes to do with humanism.

#### Humanist Heritage

Our Humanist Heritage programme, created to increase public appreciation of the significant history of humanism in the UK, enjoyed another successful year. We continued to expand our *Humanist Heritage* website, unearthing the history of humanist activism in the UK and Ireland. We added over a dozen articles covering individuals, organisations, events, and special subjects like Darwin Day or the contributions of Jewish humanists to the humanist movement. In the summer, we also showcased the website to our social media audiences with a 'Humanism in 100 Objects' feature that told the story of our movement through a series of historical objects. The website continued to see increasing page traffic over the course of the year, mainly via organic discovery from search engines. The website saw 58,000 unique page visits (up from 40,000 in 2021).

In terms of wider outreach and engagement, our Humanist Heritage Coordinator organised an international conference on humanist history in September with researchers from Queen Mary University, the University of Gothenburg, and the International Society for Historians of Atheism, Secularism, and Humanism, which was attended by 40 historians and saw the debut of 30 new academic papers about aspects of humanist history in Europe. Our Humanist Heritage Coordinator also published articles for History Workshop Online and the American Humanist Association and spoke at an online conference organised by the University of Chichester. We organised heritage-themed lectures with Nan Sloane (on 'Uncontrollable Women') and S.I. Martin (on 'The Beliefs of Black Georgians'), supported Bristol Humanists to inaugurate its own Emma Martin Lecture (named for a 19th century local humanist activist), and coordinated a *Humanist Heritage* Wikipedia edit-a-thon with LGBT Humanists. We also further developed our guided series of Humanist Walks in partnership with Go Jauntly by launching a self-guided walk of Belfast's humanist history in time for our 2022 Convention in Belfast in June. And we were in contact with the authors of the upcoming

Bloomsbury release *The History of the Humanist Movement in Britain*, whose development we supported with access to our archives and research support.

The project has also been a fruitful source of new resources for our schools resources website, *Understanding Humanism*. We commissioned an animator to produce an animated video for school covering some of the project's findings, and we worked with an illustrator and a children's writer to produce a new children's resource focusing on the lives of four humanist women (George Eliot, Lady Florence Dixie, Rosalind Franklin, and Lorraine Hansberry).

At the tail end of the year, we learned that our joint application with Conway Hall for a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant had been successful, meaning that the project would continue for several more years.

## Events

Events continued to be one of our most important vehicles for communicating with large audiences about aspects of the humanist approach to life, as well as a rich source of high-quality content for our YouTube channel, whose videos were viewed 426,000 times over the year (607,00 in 2021). Our return to in-person events wasn't completely smooth; we started the year in continued pandemic conditions, with restrictions and face coverings. Caution inevitably meant that in-person tickets sold more slowly than in the past, especially in the cold months. And later in the year, industrial action from London Underground and National Rail workers led to other issues (such as postponed events). In spite of these challenges, we had a full and busy programme, and concluded 2022 confident in our balance of online and in-person events going into 2023.

Our most high-profile events remain those in our Annual Lectures and Medal Series. In February, we awarded our annual Darwin Day Lecture Medal to infectious disease expert Professor Dame Anne Johnson as part of a hybrid online-and-in-person event at Conway Hall in London. She lectured on '*People and Pathogens: the evolution of infections*', chaired by our Vice President Professor Alice Roberts, to a combined audience of over 1,000. In March, we awarded Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock our Franklin Lecture Medal as part of an online lecture on '*Reaching for the stars*' chaired by Samira Ahmed in the week of International Women's Day. We awarded Kenan Malik the Holyoake Lecture Medal in November, which he received following a lecture in Manchester on the topic of '*Towards a humanist politics*,' exploring the political history of racism and antiracism. We awarded Professor Sir Simon Baron-Cohen the Blackham Lecture Medal (the Blackham Lecture being focused on education and in partnership with Birmingham Humanists) at an online lecture on autism acceptance entitled '*The Pattern Seekers*'. And finally that month, we awarded the Voltaire Lecture Medal to historian Dr Sarah Chaney following her lecture on '*Am I Normal?*' on the strange history of that ubiquitous question. It was chaired by our President, Dr Adam Rutherford. 1,969 people bought tickets to events in this series in 2022.

Our Annual Convention in Belfast in June was our largest-scale event of the year and attracted a wide range of speakers, including comedians Angela Barnes (our patron), Tim McGarry (our patron), Colin Murphy, and Eleanor Tiernan; scientists Dr Kate Devlin (our patron), Dr Adam Rutherford (President), Professor Richard Wiseman (our patron), Dr Meg Schwamb, and Professor Stephen Smartt (our patron); historians Professor Francesca Stavrakopoulou (our patron) and Dr Charlie Lynch; plus many more brilliant

speakers with expertise in human rights, education, philosophy, sports, the arts, technology, broadcasting, politics, and more. 300 attended, with roughly half coming from Northern Ireland. We were pleased to extend our impact amongst the public in Northern Ireland, who typically find it harder to attend our events in Britain.

Our wider programme of both online and in-person events and lectures on various topics relating to humanism continued throughout the year, as well as our popular online series of *In Conversation With...* events with thinkers and entertainers on a subject where they have deep insight or expertise. Other highlights included a special online book launch for *The Little Book of Humanist Weddings* (featuring Alice Roberts, Andrew Copson, and celebrants Zena Birch and Audrey Simmons); our Vice President Professor AC Grayling's event in Leeds to launch our Leeds Humanist branch; a special discussion of the nature of morality with Professor Nichola Raihani (2021 Voltaire Lecturer and patron), Dr Oliver Scott-Curry (2021 Darwin Day Lecturer), and Professor Richard Norman (our patron); and historians Nan Sloane and S.I. Martin, who lectured on humanist women and Black British freethinkers respectively, in connection with *Humanist Heritage*. These events attracted 2,044 participants.

### Social media and website

We continued to reach very large numbers of people through our social media channels, which have become one of the main places to publish new educational content about humanism, alongside news relating to our services and public policy work. Our primary Humanists UK social media channels reached 8.4 million people on Facebook (7.7 million in 2021), 26 million on Twitter (compared with 57 million in 2021, largely due to our high-profile Census campaign), and 430,000 on Instagram (489,000 in 2021).

In the summer, we ran a short social media campaign called 'Humanist Voices' across all our digital channels, putting the spotlight on well-known humanists (such as Humanists UK patrons) plus others, including some of our members, to explore humanist perspectives on creating meaning and purpose, thinking ethically, acting morally, death, freedom, human rights, humanity's place in the universe, and more. The campaign reached 1.3 million people on digital channels and accounted for a third of our overall social media reach in August. It also appeared to be responsible for a sharp uptick in sales for *The Little Book of Humanism* that month.

Throughout the year, we continued to produce new original graphical and written content explaining humanism in different ways and pitched at different audiences, including interviews with Humanists UK volunteers and patrons, and graphics about aspects of humanism or featuring quotations from famous humanists. Our original graphics, produced in-house, are often some of our best-performing content on social media. In October we also launched a brand new animated film narrated by our patron Stephen Fry, explaining humanism and relating it to his choice to support Humanists UK. In March, we released a direct-to-camera piece from Dr Adam Rutherford, announcing his appointment as President of Humanists UK, and his reasons for supporting us. At Christmas, we released a more festive video along similar lines from our Chief Executive.

In August, our podcast *What I Believe* released its fifth series, adding musician Frank Turner, comedians Angela Barnes and Tim McGarry, model and humanist activist Laura Lacole, historian S.I. Martin, psychologist Dr Sue Blackmore, and All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group Vice Chair Clive Lewis MP to its roster of interviews exploring the varied

ideas, convictions, and opinions of humanists in the public eye. The podcast received over 73,000 downloads and attracted glowing reviews from listeners on podcast platforms.

We contracted a professional designer to assist us with finishing touches to the next iteration of the Humanists UK website, with extensive new pages on our advice and support services, our campaigns and what we stand for, and the humanist approach to life.

### Education resources (Understanding Humanism)

In January, we relaunched our *Understanding Humanism* website for teachers and parents. The overhaul reorganised over 100 new resources into five core areas of knowledge about humanism (human beings, understanding the world, the one life, humanist ethics, and society) and added more Welsh translations and more pages specifying how to use the site in relation to the new Welsh curriculum. The new website features a 'How to use' guide, a 'Core knowledge' guide to assist with the creation of units of study on humanism, guidance on what is and isn't a non-religious worldview, dos and don'ts when teaching about the non-religious, and the case for including humanism in religious education. We also introduced brand new resources, including on how to access our school speakers, on atheism and agnosticism, global humanism, the history of humanism, data about the non-religious, humanist ceremonies, and humanist perspectives on many contemporary ethical debates.

The *Understanding Humanism* website received 142,000 hits (152,000 in 2021) and our resources were downloaded 40,000 times (35,000 in 2021). Our separate *Assemblies for All* website, which collates industry-best resources to assist teachers with putting on inclusive assemblies on a range of subjects, received 230,000 page views (up from 150,000 in 2021). Meanwhile, our network of over 200 trained and accredited school speakers made over 500 school visits and spoke to a record total of 55,000 pupils (up from 21,000 in 2021, and 47,000 in 2019, pre-pandemic).

Our team was consulted by the BBC on new Key Stage 1 resources about humanism. We were also approached by education publisher Hodder in relation to their Key Stage 3 textbook on Religion, Values, and Ethics for the new Curriculum for Wales. Many of our suggestions for edits to the humanism content were accepted, although we were disappointed that the final publication did not produce equivalent content on humanism as it did for world religions. Our Director of Understanding Humanism also wrote several articles for *RE Today* for publication in 2023.

### Teacher training

We delivered teacher training sessions to 397 teachers (330 in 2021), and our series of continuing professional development (CPD) webinars proved to be an effective model for reaching large numbers of people, as in 2021. We noticed that our courses were more popular with primary school teachers than with secondary school teachers, and so will place an increased emphasis on promoting the course to secondaries in 2023. We also advertised the service through an appearance on *The RE Podcast*.

We returned to delivering teacher training on subject knowledge and practical ideas for the classroom via our online twilight webinars as well as at conferences and special

in-person events. We delivered CPD to teachers from Altrincham Grammar School for Girls, Thomas James Primary School in London, via the North Lincolnshire RE group, St Helens RE hub, and Barnet RE Network, as well as to teachers at the Hampshire RE conference and the Salisbury *CREative REinspiring* RE Conference. We supported initial teacher training for students at Queen's University Belfast, Stranmillis University, Sheffield Hallam University, Leeds Trinity University, and the University of Lincoln. CPD webinars were also attended by teachers in British schools overseas, including in Bahrain, Thailand, and Cyprus.

## Courses

Our popular online courses 'Introducing humanism' and 'Humanist Lives' continued to attract new learners through the FutureLearn education platform owned by the Open University, with 548 active learners (2,000 in 2021). The platform's popularity dwindled in comparison to previous years due to FutureLearn's switch from free participation to a pay-to-use model. Late in the year, we concluded our contract with FutureLearn and will be exploring ways to deliver the courses, which we own, directly to learners in 2023. In their five years at FutureLearn, a total of 40,000 people signed up to take them.

Separately, we made further improvements to our 'One Life' course, which is run by our local branches and partner groups around the UK, based on feedback from groups who wanted the flexibility of having locally run courses that can also take place online.

## SACREs and SACs

We continued to help local authorities to improve teaching about humanism in schools by supporting humanist representatives on Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education in England and Standing Advisory Councils on Religion, Values, and Ethics in Wales (known as SACREs in England and SACs in Wales). We ended the year with representatives on 129 councils (up from 125), including 77 where a humanist sat as a 'full member' (up from 64). Achieving equality for humanists to sit as full members alongside religious representatives on SACREs/SACs remains a priority of our public affairs team, and for our goal of seeing humanism taught about in every school.

Throughout the year, we supported our SACRE reps with regular webinars, organised both nationally and regionally, and with termly newsletters. We also organised a special Education Day conference attended by 50 SACRE reps and humanist school speakers.

## Books about humanism

We promoted humanism through promoting *The Little Book of Humanism* (released in 2020) and *The Little Book of Humanist Weddings* (released in 2021), both co-authored by our Chief Executive Andrew Copson and Vice President Alice Roberts. We supported the latter book with a special online launch event early in the year, and promoted both using social media. Together both books sold 3,650 copies (8,850 in 2021). All author royalties were donated to Humanists UK. Work continued on the forthcoming 2023 release *The Little Book of Humanist Funerals*.

Andrew Copson, our patron the philosopher Professor Richard Norman, and our Director of Understanding Humanism Luke Donnellan were co-authors of a new undergraduate textbook *Understanding Humanism*, published by Routledge in September 2022.

We also continued our partnership with Books at Press, which published *Belonging and Believing: My Humanist Family* by Gill Vaisey, providing a positive introduction to the humanist approach to life for early years and Key Stage 1 pupils.

In Jersey, our Channel Islands Humanists section delivered copies of *What is humanism?* by Michael Rosen and Annemarie Young to all schools across Jersey as part of the Umbrella Book Collection initiative organised by Jersey Community Relations. In the summer, we also distributed copies of *The Little Book of Humanism* to all prisons in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland so that non-religious prisoners would have access to reading material they might find inspiring or reflect upon.

### Dialogue

We continued to expand understanding of humanism among religious people through our dialogue programme. Our network of trained dialogue volunteers had an extremely productive year, and grew in size to 123 members (70 in 2021). Major events included a 'Dialogue in Belfast' event with Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Bahá'í, and humanist members of the NI Interfaith Forum, and friendly and well-attended meetings with the Sheffield, Ashford, Lincoln, Cheltenham, West Chester, and Richmond Interfaith groups. Various activities for Interfaith Week in November also took place in Chester, Huddersfield, East Kent, Newbury, Leeds, Alresford, Cheltenham, Sheffield, Southampton, Richmond, Upminster, Ipswich, and Preston.

Outside of this, our 18-35s section Young Humanists hosted an online panel discussion on 'How do different beliefs approach death?' with Bahá'í, Muslim, Catholic, and humanist speakers, and attended the Faith & Belief Forum's 'Interfaith Fun Run', supporting runners raising money for Humanists UK in London. We also participated in a seminar on 'Humanists and Dialogue' at Oxford Centre for Religion and Culture; contributed to a 'World Religion Day' Bahá'í-organised event in Chester; spoke on 'Inclusion' from a humanist point of view at a panel discussion hosted by Huddersfield Parish Church; represented humanists on the West Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum Voluntary and Faith Subcommittee; spoke about 'Forgiveness' on the panel of a 'Belief in Dialogue' online event; attended both the 'Belong' conference and the annual Liberal Jewish Synagogue 'interfaith chanukah'; and our Chief Executive was invited by the Board of Deputies for British Jews to present on humanism and Humanists UK to members of their staff team and Board.

## **2. More non-religious people living happier, more confident, and more ethical lives**

After a two-year period of disruption due to the pandemic, most of our direct services returned to relative normalcy over the course of 2022.

Our network of trained and accredited humanist celebrants, Humanist Ceremonies, saw a small drop in size to 556 members (573 in 2021) across England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey, and the Isle of Man. We saw a larger number of celebrants taking early retirement (some citing the cost of living crisis) combined with a small reduction in the number of new celebrants trained. It was, however, a record-breaking year in terms of the number of ceremonies taken. Our celebrants performed 10,965 humanist ceremonies (7,576 in 2021), which was a 20% increase on the previous

pre-pandemic record in 2019. These included 2,519 humanist weddings (1,554 in 2021), 7,914 humanist funerals (7,522 in 2021), and 532 baby-naming ceremonies (310 in 2021). Our weddings continued to be most popular in Northern Ireland, where they enjoy legal recognition. But with well over 1,000 in England and Wales, and nearly 1,300 in Northern Ireland, it was a record-breaking year for our weddings in both jurisdictions!

Our Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network (NRPSN), whose members continued to struggle to resume their placements providing emotional support in many hospitals, hospices, and prisons, ended the year with 208 accredited members (240 in 2021). For the first time this including graduates of the MA programme for humanist pastoral care endorsed by us. NRPSN members had voluntary placements at 63 hospitals, 13 prisons, and eight universities and paid placements at nine hospitals and one prison. It remains a priority for our Humanist Care and campaigns teams to overcome unlawful barriers being put in the way of non-religious pastoral carers volunteering or taking up paid roles in institutions. In terms of significant developments and engagements, we contributed to the Ministry of Defence's internal review of its chaplaincy and pastoral care arrangements; we were given confirmation by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service that it would add a humanist representative to its chaplaincy council; and the Senedd appointed its first ever humanist pastoral carer.

Our apostate support programme, Faith to Faithless, developed over the course of the year, and with generous donor funding we recruited a larger Faith to Faithless staff team (1.6 FTE total), comprising a Service Manager, a Development Officer, and a Policy Officer. As well as providing a schedule of socials and facilitated peer support sessions, we brought on board five academic PhD researchers into a research associates group looking at the experiences of apostates. Separately, we commissioned a new research project looking at lived experiences and service outcomes for former Jehovah's Witnesses specifically, which is expected to conclude in mid-2023 and be published in 2024. Our humanist asylum support service, which had previously been managed by a member of our campaigns team, was also integrated into Faith to Faithless. We received requests for support from 16 asylum claimants, 10 of whom were eligible for and signed up for our support. Of those 10, two were successfully granted asylum, and eight cases were ongoing at year's end.

Support for local humanist communities was bolstered by the addition of a staff member responsible for the development of our ongoing pilot project, whose purpose is to explore if we can better support our members locally to advance Humanists UK aims locally through Humanists UK branches. We concluded the year with eight Humanists UK local branches (five in 2021) and 48 partner groups (47 in 2021).

Our various special interest networks and sections continued to organise activities of interest to different demographics within our membership. LGBT Humanists organised socials, events, participation in summer Pride parades, and a ceremony for Trans Day of Remembrance. Defence Humanists organised its annual humanist Remembrance Day event, participated in the National Service of Remembrance, and supported humanist groups to join in with local Remembrance ceremonies. Young Humanists maintained a full online and offline events programme. The London Humanist Choir continued to book performances around the capital, including its own annual 'One Life' concert. Humanist Climate Action contributed to a number of consultations on climate-related matters and was, jointly with Humanists in Business, our fastest-growing network.

### **3. More people enjoying greater freedom of thought, of expression, and of choice over their own lives**

Our policy platform details that we want *‘everyone to have the fullest possible freedom of choice in the shaping of their own lives, limited only by the rights and freedoms of others in a fair and equitable society and never by the pressures of religion, tradition, or outmoded law. This includes children, who should be actively prepared in schools for a life in society in which they can exercise this freedom and should, while still children, enjoy their human rights with increasing fullness in line with their growing maturity.’* Our strategy spells out that we aspire to *‘influence public opinion, public policy, legislation, and case law to defend and advance: freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief; freedom of expression; and freedom of choice to the extent compatible with the rights and freedoms of others in a fair and equitable society.’*

Campaign resources were mainly concentrated on our campaigns to do with legal recognition of humanist marriage, opposing state-funded religious schools, reforming RE and collective worship, legalising assisted dying, and promoting international freedom of religion or belief (FORB). But as this report details, we also undertook a great deal of reactive policy and campaigning work in line with our broader public policy platform and strategy. The area of work is detailed below, organised by theme.

#### **Freedom of thought**

Freedom of thought is a foundational requirement of a free society, and advocacy of this fundamental right by humanists goes back many centuries in this country and in others. Our public policy platform endorses the concept of the secular state as the best means to achieve freedom, fairness, equal citizenship, and peace in a plural and cohesive society. We maintain that only by maintaining a fair separation between public institutions and institutions of religion or belief (including those of humanism) can the state fully respect and promote freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief for all citizens, up to the limits of the rights and freedoms of others in a fair society

#### **Inclusion of the non-religious**

As ever, we advocated for a level playing field and equal treatment in law and policy for those of both religious and non-religious convictions. We engaged with the Welsh Government on the matter of admitting us to what is currently their “Faith Communities Forum”, receiving assurances that the committee will be reformed. The process has been drawn out due to resistance from religious groups. We also met with Colin Bloom to discuss the forthcoming report from his Independent Faith Engagement Review for the UK government, and with Dame Sara Khan to discuss the UK Government’s independent review on social cohesion and resilience. We responded to the Commission on Political Power’s consultation on House of Lords reform, and pointed to the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group’s *Time for Reflection* report, which described various discriminatory aspects of the Lords, including the presence of 26 appointed Anglican bishops, their speaking and consultation privileges over other peers, and certain Code of Conduct exemptions. We also highlighted discriminatory outcomes from archaic processes in Parliament, including how attendance at parliamentary prayers is required to reserve seats ahead of important debates.

We continued to engage with local and national governments to argue for equal participation and inclusion of the non-religious, including in official civic events. Events surrounding the death of the Queen showed how far we still must go to embed inclusive practice. Humanists were sadly excluded from various commemoration and accession events taking place in London, Cardiff, Edinburgh, and Belfast, which we believe may have been an unfortunate oversight. We and members of the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group wrote to the relevant ministers, the Duke of Norfolk, and the Royal Household to discuss future inclusive practice ahead of the coronation, to which our Chief Executive was in due course invited. Separately, we also met with London City Hall to discuss our suggestions for reform of the 2021 Remembrance service, which had been held in Southwark Cathedral and which, by excluding the non-religious, did not properly reflect the diversity of London or the UK armed forces.

### Balanced approaches to religions and worldviews: curriculums

One of the key planks for our campaigning for balanced approaches to religion and worldviews is our work promoting the inclusion of humanism in school curriculums. In Northern Ireland, we had a major victory when the High Court ruled in July in a case brought by a humanist parent that Northern Ireland's regimes of 'exclusively' Christian RE and collective worship were unlawful. We used this judgement to argue for similar interpretations of the law in England and Wales, and prepared briefings for MLAs for the eventuality of power-sharing and devolved government resuming in Northern Ireland.

In Wales, we continued to engage with the Welsh Government and support the development of humanism-specific materials for Religion, Values, and Ethics under the new Curriculum for Wales. We also worked with the Welsh Government and the Welsh Association of SACREs to produce GCSE content and teaching training modules. The curriculum launched in September.

In England, we supported Baroness Meacher's amendment to the (subsequently withdrawn) Schools Bill that sought to replace 'Religious Education' with a more explicitly inclusive 'Religion and Worldviews' scheme, of the sort recommended by the independent Commission on Religious Education a few years ago. A similar legal change was suggested in the 'Education (Non-religious Philosophical Convictions) Bill', introduced to the Lords by Baroness Burt. It is not expected to have time to become law due to lack of parliamentary time.

We supported litigation efforts by a non-religious parent in Worcester which led to major reforms of the curriculum in local schools, including that the Key Stage 4 curriculum would become fully inclusive of humanism. The local academy has agreed to meet the parent's request by providing, in addition to the GCSE course, two other units of RE, one for Year 10 and one for Year 11, focusing on non-religious worldviews and taught from a critical and objective perspective. This meets the requirement to accord equal respect for non-religious worldviews in RE established in 2015 by the case *Fox v Secretary of State for Education*.

### Balanced approaches to religions and worldviews: 'collective worship'

Another dimension of our campaign for a balanced approach to religions and worldviews in schools relates to the legal requirement for daily acts of 'broadly Christian' collective worship in schools, which we seek to end. This law is unpopular (many schools

flout it) and the only alternative explicitly allowed for in law provides only for a daily act of worship of a religious character that is not exclusively Christian, such as worship of another religion, or 'multi-faith' worship. In the absence of inclusive assemblies, children from non-Christian families risk stigmatisation, and in any case are typically left with no educationally worthwhile or meaningful alternative activities, should their parents or guardians opt them out of religious assemblies.

On this front, we supported the progress of All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group Vice Chair Baroness Burt's Education (Assemblies) Bill, which would have abolished the requirement for Christian collective worship in non-denominational schools. In spite of broad support, this Bill is certain to fail as the Government will not allow it time for further readings.

We supported local parents, school governors, and teachers in relation to issues involving the local bodies that determine RE curriculums. In February, we supported one governor with an appeal to his local SACRE for his school to provide inclusive assemblies in place of Christian collective worship, as per our policy; this matter was still ongoing at year's end but may progress to the courts. We also assisted local humanists in Redbridge, Walsall, and Kent with different stages of their applications for full membership of their local SACREs. While successful in Redbridge, we began preparing legal action to challenge Kent's decision to refuse a humanist.

In June, the UK Government told the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child that the UK, Northern Ireland, and Welsh Governments had no plans to reform collective worship laws in line with the UN's recommendations. We are hopeful that the Scottish Government however may yet seek reform.

### Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

We want all children to receive a full, factual, and age-appropriate education about sex and relationships to keep them happy, healthy, and safe.

After months of baseless protests the High Court rejected a legal challenge to the Welsh Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) curriculum in December. Anti-RSE protesters had attempted to have the decision to remove the right to withdraw from the subject judicially reviewed on the basis that it violated their freedom of religion or belief. Drawing in part from case law in *Fox v Secretary of State for Education* (where humanists in England successfully challenged the RE GCSE syllabus), the Court ruled that the curriculum will be delivered in an objective, critical, and pluralistic manner and thus could not constitute indoctrination. We were widely quoted in a number of major news outlets, including the *Daily Mail*.

In May, our Education Policy Researcher gave a talk on why faith-based carve-outs to relationships and sex education (RSE) should be prohibited to the Westminster Education Forum.

### Religious state schools

Without doubt the most serious remaining area of religious privilege in our overwhelmingly secular society is the built-in bias in the law in favour of religious schools. This persists despite their unpopularity with the public, shown in repeated

polls, and their need for specific exemptions from various aspects of equality and human rights law to continue to exist. These privileges are not entirely a matter of outdated laws: many are embodied in relatively recent deals that successive governments have done with the churches, especially the Church of England which has openly acknowledged the importance of its schools to its future hopes.

Our aspiration is for every state-funded school to be open to pupils and families of every religion or belief, and to teach a broad and balanced curriculum with an inclusive, non-sectarian school ethos. One dimension of this work means challenging the process of green-lighting new faith schools with discriminatory admissions policies. We supported groups of parents and councillors in areas across the UK to oppose the approval of new faith schools.

In March we appeared on a *BBC Politics North West* television segment about the effects of faith-based discrimination on school admissions in Liverpool. With our Liverpool Humanists branch, we had previously run a social media campaign drawing attention to the very high proportion of religiously selective school places in Liverpool.

Also in March, we wrote to the Government about plans announced in its *Opportunity for All* white paper to financially assist more religious groups to open yet more religious schools in England. The announced consultation on admissions reform, delayed to 2023, will be an opportunity to campaign vocally on religious selection in schools.

We also highlighted the discriminatory impact of religiously selective school admissions policies in the Children's Rights Alliance for England's consultation on children's rights.

In terms of high-profile cases, we offered our support to a gay author who was banned by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark from speaking at Catholic schools in south London. We engaged with Ofsted and the Department for Education (DfE) about the case. Ofsted conducted a snap inspection of the school which was critical of the Archdiocese's decision but praised the school's otherwise inclusive ethos. Teachers at the school went on strike in protest in opposition to the decision made by the Archdiocese.

### Unregistered (illegal) schools

Another facet of our work relates to unregistered (illegal) religious schools, which typically practise corporal punishment, do not comply with teacher training or health and safety requirements, and teach a curriculum composed entirely or almost entirely of rote scripture learning, often without even covering basics like maths or English.

In May, we welcomed confirmation in the Queen's Speech that the UK Government would seek to close legal loopholes that allow illegal schools to operate in England. The draft legislation reflected the recommendations we made to its *Regulating independent educational institutions* consultation. We worked with other stakeholders to come up with amendments, which were accepted by the Government, to tighten up the definition of a school. Sadly the Schools Bill as a whole was withdrawn due to concerns about other sections of the Bill, and we continued to push the DfE to bring back the illegal schools measures with a narrower Bill. Separately, we also had discussions about illegal schools in June with the Shadow Secretary of State for Education.

### Public services: Support for those leaving high control religions

Our Faith to Faithless and policy teams co-produced our response to a consultation by the UK Government's Independent Review of Social Cohesion and Resilience, chaired by Dame Sara Khan. We used the platform to highlight the lack of appropriate support available to apostates, how restrictive faith school admissions are counterproductive to social cohesion, and the need for non-religious pastoral carers. We subsequently met with Dame Sara to discuss our recommendations further.

We also continued to provide ongoing policy guidance and operational support to the Faith to Faithless asylum support service.

### Right to asylum

We continued to support humanist asylum seekers, particularly from 13 countries where humanists face the death penalty and others where persecution of humanists is an acute problem, and we reflected this experience in continued engagement with the Home Office in relation to proposed immigration and asylum reforms.

At our AGM in June, our members passed a motion condemning the Government's new policy of deporting asylum claimants to Rwanda, which would send people to a jurisdiction with a poor record in freedom of belief.

### **Freedom of choice**

Freedom of choice is a cross-cutting priority in our policy work, intersecting closely with our work for greater freedom of thought and expression. It frequently underpins our request for equitable treatment for humanism and humanists in law, as with our campaign for legal recognition of humanist marriages. Freedom of choice also underpins our longstanding demands for equality and universal access to justice, and our commitments to human rights as a paramount legal and social endeavour. It is also embodied by the continued presence of racial equality, women's rights, children's rights, and LGBT rights as prominent themes in our public advocacy.

### Legal recognition of humanist marriages

We want couples across the UK to be able to marry in a legally binding ceremony with an accredited Humanists UK celebrant, just as religious couples can with a trained minister of religion, without having to take on the extra expense and barrier of a second ceremony in a register office. Couples can have legally recognised humanist marriages in this way in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Jersey, and Guernsey, but not in England, Wales, or the Isle of Man.

Humanist marriage was a significant area of interest for the All Party Parliamentary Humanist Group (APPHG), whose members laid down numerous parliamentary questions to ascertain the Government's view on the matter and inquire about the Law Commission review of marriage law in England and Wales, which was released in July.

In January, we responded to the UK Government's consultation on outdoor civil and religious marriages to raise the issue of humanist marriages in England and Wales. The Government decided to make outdoor civil and religious marriages permanent. The

reforms did not include humanist marriages, despite the consultation receiving a large number of responses in favour of legal recognition. This decision undermined the Government's stated position that it must wait until the outcome of the Law Commission's review before introducing any 'piecemeal' reforms of marriage law.

Later in the year, we organised a joint letter signed by 53 cross-party MPs and peers from across the religion and belief spectrum, calling on the Government to grant immediate legal recognition to humanist marriages. This led to a Westminster Hall debate sponsored by APPHG then-Chair Crispin Blunt MP supported by 26 cross-party MPs. The minister for marriage, Tom Pursglove MP, responded by recognising the debate's quality and the strength of feeling on humanist marriages. But he repeated the Government line that the matter must wait for the outcome of the Law Commission's review of marriage law. Separately, the Second Church Estates Commissioner confirmed in Parliament that the Church of England 'has no principled objection to humanist marriage'. At a later debate in the Lords in the summer, many peers from all parties spoke in favour of humanist marriages, with one of the strongest interventions in support coming from the former Communities Secretary, Lord Pickles.

The Westminster Hall debate later led to a meeting with Pursglove on the subject. One of our celebrants also met the Prime Minister at his constituency surgery to discuss the issue, as did another with then-Deputy Prime Minister and Justice Secretary Dominic Raab. We met with the Law Commission, the Local Government Association, the National Panel for Registration, and the Director of Faith and Public Life at the Church of England to discuss our views about the proposed Law Commission reforms.

The Law Commission published the outcome of its weddings law project on 19 July, marking what could be the end of nine years of reviews on humanist marriages. We renewed our calls for the Government to end the long delay faced by humanist couples by using the order-making powers of the 2013 Marriage Act, at least as an interim measure, as the Law Commission proposals could take years to become law (if they ever do). We briefed the relevant teams at the Ministry of Justice, the Labour Party, the Liberal Democrats, and the Church of England on our views. Our response to the report was covered extensively on mainstream television, newspapers, and radio, including *BBC News*, *BBC Breakfast*, *BBC News Online*, *The Times*, *The Mirror*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Independent* twice, *The Evening Standard*, *Wales Online*, and over 150 Press Association articles.

Humanist marriage was the topic of two APPHG meetings. In the first, parliamentarians heard from a claimant in the 2020 humanist marriage case, Kate Harrison; our celebrant Zena Birch; the barrister in both the England and Wales and Northern Ireland cases Steve McQuitty; and our Chief Executive. The second, in October, saw the launch of the APPHG's second report on humanist marriage, *No Lawful Impediment*. Baroness Bakewell DBE introduced the report at the event which took place in Parliament. Other speakers included our Chief Executive, humanist celebrant Hannah McKerchar, and claimants in the 2020 High Court case Victoria Hosegood and Charli Janeway. The report led to a debate and another series of questions in the Lords, in which the Bishop of St Albans joined calls for the Government to simply resolve the matter by laying an Order for humanist marriages.

As for our work on humanist marriage in jurisdictions where it is already recognised, the Northern Ireland government published its response to its marriage law consultation in

July, confirming that humanist marriages will be placed on an equal statutory footing to religious marriages. The NI government will not bring forward legislation on commercial celebrants, citing a lack of human rights grounds or popular consensus. We also met with the President of Guernsey's Policy and Resources Committee (formerly known as Chief Minister) to address outstanding inequalities in Guernsey's marriage law, which result in humanists still paying extra charges and jumping through additional hoops to get married in Guernsey.

### Assisted dying

Freedom of choice also underpins our advocacy of a compassionate assisted dying law. We want those with incurable or terminal conditions to have access to assistance to end their suffering, subject to safeguards requiring a fixed, uncoerced, and genuine wish to do so made in sound mind. We work closely with the Assisted Dying Coalition, which we previously helped to establish, and whose members share our policy. These organisations include My Death, My Decision (with whom we share a staff member), Humanist Society Scotland, Friends at the End (Scotland), Let Me Choose (Isle of Man), End of Life Choices Jersey, and End of Life Ireland.

We briefed MPs and Lords at several points across the year, including in relation to an amendment to the Health and Care Bill, a Westminster Hall debate, and Baroness Meacher's Assisted Dying Bill. The latter was not given enough time to be debated at full length and so failed automatically.

In March we learned that one of our celebrants had been arrested on suspicion of assisting or encouraging suicide following the death of incurably suffering assisted dying campaigner Sharon Johnston in Switzerland, as featured in a 2021 BBC documentary, *When Would You Want to Die?* She was later exonerated following a gruelling police investigation. Along with My Death, My Decision, we highlighted through her case how our inhumane law treats people who have done nothing wrong, even in open-and-shut cases surrounding the settled will of an ardent assisted dying campaigner. We also supported proposals from the Crown Prosecution Service to reform its treatment of mercy killings, but regretted that neither this nor its assisted dying guidance provided an adequate substitute for humane legislation.

In May, the APPHG made assisted dying the subject of its AGM in parliament, where speakers included Dr Henry Marsh, our patron and a renowned neurosurgeon living with prostate cancer; Louise Doublet, States of Jersey Deputy; Lauren Nicklinson, daughter of the late assisted dying campaigner Tony Nicklinson; and our Chief Executive. We also worked again with Lauren in August to mark the 10th anniversary of her father Tony Nicklinson's death, which attracted media coverage across regional BBC TV and radio stations.

Along with My Death, My Decision, we participated in research from the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) to produce a 'POSTnote' on assisted dying. Published in July, the POSTnote aimed to provide a summary of the ethical debate, research, and public opinion on assisted dying and related UK legislation.

In December, the House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee launched an inquiry into assisted dying in England and Wales. We contacted the Committee with offers to give evidence; the inquiry is expected to start in early 2023. We also

encouraged our members to fill in the committee's survey. We were concerned that seven out of 11 members of the Committee have previously stated that they do not support assisted dying in letters to constituents. Earlier in the year, the composition of the Committee would have been much more favourable.

In Jersey, the government launched a public engagement process on assisted dying. We were concerned that this was a consultation that could be an opportunity for assisted dying opponents to reverse 'in principle' previously taken on the island. However, we were reassured by the States Assembly that this was not the case. Our colleagues at End of Life Choices Jersey attended much of the engagement process and were similarly reassured that it was merely an example of healthy democratic engagement. We were told to expect legislation in 2023.

In Scotland, the Scottish Parliament published its report on its public consultation on assisted dying, which showed strong support. We and our sister charity Humanist Society Scotland are vocally in support of the Bill. Meanwhile in the Isle of Man, we backed the introduction of an assisted dying Private Member's Bill by Dr Alex Allinson MHK. This was also supported by our member Vicky Christian, who is chair of Assisted Dying Coalition member Let Me Choose. The Manx government launched a consultation on the Bill in December. In France, the President announced a citizens' assembly on assisted dying, as was done in Jersey.

### LGBT rights

The rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans (LGBT) people continued to be a recurring theme for us, in policy work and in public advocacy. Much of our education work on Relationships and Sex Education and discrimination against teachers in schools touched on the need for LGBT-inclusive subject content and policies, and we spoke out regularly against homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic hatred and discrimination through our social media channels.

We were one of the earliest organisations in the UK, if not the earliest, to call for an end to so-called 'conversion therapy' (a fraudulent, pseudoscientific practice that amounts to torture of LGBT people on the false premise that it can change their sexuality or gender identity). Our volunteer-led section, LGBT Humanists, has been advocating a ban on the practice since the 1990s. Since 2018, we and LGBT Humanists have been doing what we can to hold successive administrations to the promise made by Theresa May's government that there will be a full legislative ban across medical, non-medical, and religious settings.

We worked with our fellow members of the Ban Conversion Therapy Coalition in respect of our work to ban that abhorrent practice. We responded to the Equalities Office's consultation on conversion therapy in January to insist that any ban must cover religious settings (where the majority of attempted 'conversions' take place) and that a distinction between coercion and consent in this context was impossible; this came after briefings to Government by pro-conversion therapy religious groups.

In March, it was announced the UK Government had abandoned its promised legislation on the issue altogether. We joined public and private calls against this, which led to the legislation being promised anew within 24 hours, albeit in a restricted form that did not apply to trans people. We urged the Government to produce a draft Bill for parliamentary

scrutiny and civil society input; its failure to do so had led to much unhelpful speculation about what a non-existent Bill supposedly would or would not do. Later in the year, we shared our platform at the UN Human Rights Council with the Ozanne Foundation to make a statement on the UK's slow progress on banning conversion therapy.

### Abortion rights

Women's freedom of choice, extending to their right to autonomy over their bodies and to make choices about their own sexual and reproductive health, continued as an important ongoing area for reactive campaigning work. In February, the UK Government announced that telemedical (at-home) abortion in England would end on 29 August with the sunset clause for pandemic-era regulations. We joined public and private calls for the provisions to remain in force. We were pleased to see the Welsh Government announced the following day that the provisions would become permanent in Wales. Later that month, we were involved in briefing Lords in favour of an amendment to the Health and Care Bill that would overrule the UK Government on this issue. We again briefed MPs on the issue when it eventually returned to the Commons, where the amendment was overwhelmingly passed. This meant that telemedical abortion became a permanent fixture in both England and Wales.

In July, we spotted that the UK Government had unilaterally removed references to 'sexual and reproductive health and rights' and 'bodily autonomy' from a statement on women's rights published at its international conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief (losing many countries' signatures in the process). We publicised the matter with an open letter from over 20 human rights, pro-choice, and international aid groups, asking for the statement to be changed back. Our actions prompted the Chair of the Women and Equalities Committee, Caroline Nokes MP, to speak out against the change. It also led to protests from Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands, who first sought an explanation, then similarly asked for the statement to be changed back, and then finally tabled their own statement. This led to four articles in the *Guardian*, three in the *i*, a front-page story in one of Denmark's daily papers, and coverage on the *Sunday* programme and in the *National*. Most of these were exclusive coverage we arranged. APPHG member Baroness Whitaker tabled three written parliamentary questions on the matter. APPHG co-chairs Tommy Sheppard MP and Baroness Bakewell wrote a joint letter to the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office to raise their concerns on behalf of the APPHG, while Baroness Hayter also submitted a separate letter. Although the change was not satisfactorily explained, the UK Government told us it would take the earliest opportunity to reassert its support for abortion rights and bodily autonomy in the UK and internationally. It later did this as part of the UK Government's Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) Conference 2022.

In October, MPs voted in favour of provisions to introduce safe abortion access zones around abortion clinics. We briefed MPs in the APPHG ahead of the debate, with member Steve McCabe MP speaking in favour. The vote was a significant victory for a longstanding policy aim.

### Access to justice

One of our busiest areas of work came in response to UK Government plans to repeal the Human Rights Act and restrict access to judicial review, whereby ordinary people

can go to court to secure their rights. We continued to lead a 250-strong coalition of organisations concerned that the Government's Bill of Rights Bill (or 'Rights Removal Bill') would leave citizens fundamentally unable to enforce the basic human rights enshrined in the European Convention of Human Rights. We continued to brief the coalition we founded around each of the Rights Removal Bill's various milestones, such as the Queen's Speech.

We also remained concerned about how the Bill would specifically hurt humanists and the non-religious, and developed a public information campaign about this. Where at present the Human Rights Act means public bodies and the courts are able to read additional words into laws and policies where this is required in order to uphold human rights, the Bill of Rights would allow for no such flexibility. This would erase the legal basis for humanists' equality in the school curriculum, in marriage law, and wherever else old laws just say 'religion' but really ought to say 'religion or belief' or 'religions and humanism'. In March, we told the Ministry of Justice that its proposals to reform the Human Rights Act 1998 'would be counterproductive and seriously risk undermining human rights protections for non-religious people'. We also expressed these concerns to the Joint Committee on Human Rights' call for evidence. Several MPs raised questions in the Commons about our concerns.

In September, with the change of Prime Minister, it was reported that the Bill of Rights Bill had been shelved, but that the Government would look to achieve some of its aims by other means. However, with yet another change of Prime Minister a few weeks later, the Bill was slated to return.

#### Public services: Pastoral care and chaplaincy

Our policy team also worked to bolster the rights of patients, workers, and visitors in hospitals, as well as prisoners, members of the armed forces, and students, lecturers, and teachers, to non-religious pastoral support through public institutions. We engaged over the course of the year with a sustained review within the Ministry of Defence looking at, among other things, whether the Non-Religious Pastoral Support Network should be endorsed to provide care within the armed forces.

Separately, we briefed members of the APPHG about pastoral care in the armed forces. Members of the group put 15 questions about the matter to the Ministry of Defence over the course of sessions in the House of Commons and House of Lords.

#### **Freedom of expression**

Free expression is a frequent cross-cutting theme in our policy work, much of which can also be thought of or categorised as issues of freedom of thought and/or freedom of choice. Our policy work and campaigning here is increasingly focused on challenging the existence of both formal and de facto bans on blasphemy and 'causing offence' in law, which history shows to have a significantly corrosive effect on both the quality of public discourse and on individuals' and communities' ability to shape their own lives and stake out an equitable role in society. This is true in the UK but also abroad, where we advocate for greater diplomatic pressure from the UK on states where identifying publicly as a humanist can cost someone their life or their freedom.

### Support for humanists at risk worldwide

One of our priorities is to advance freedom of religion or belief for all, and to draw greater attention, in particular from the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO), to the plight of people persecuted for their humanist beliefs.

A major case for us was that of Mubarak Bala, the President of the Nigerian Humanist Association, who was arrested and detained and subjected to numerous severe procedural irregularities on accusations of making blasphemous posts on Facebook in 2020. Following further irregularities and allegations of threats made against his family, he was sentenced to 24 years in prison for alleged blasphemous posts on Facebook. Following this, we organised a large protest outside the Nigerian High Commission, marking two years since his arrest. Our Chief Executive, our patron Eddie Marsan, and Clive Aruede of the Association of Black Humanists all spoke at the protest, and we circulated flyers encouraging members, supporters, and the general public to write to their MP about his case. At least seven parliamentarians have tabled questions on his case, and several members of the APPHG wrote to the Government about him, including Co-Chairs Crispin Blunt MP and Baroness Bakewell; Vice Chair Jeff Smith MP; and member/Shadow Foreign Minister Lord Collins. Bala's case was also raised at a debate on FoRB in Parliament on 28 June, ahead of the Ministerial. We also met the FCDO's FoRB and Nigeria teams, staff from the British Deputy High Commission in Lagos, and the staff from the Nigerian High Commission in London.

Also on Mubarak's case, we organised a joint letter from civil society actors to the UK Government, urging them to take various actions on his case, including issuing a public statement. Its signatories included the Chairs of the UK FoRB Forum and All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on International FoRB; the Bishop of Truro; the Chief Executive of Humanists International; the Head of Advocacy of Christian Solidarity Worldwide; the Coptic Orthodox Archbishop of London; the President of the Buddhist Society; Hindu Matters Britain, the All Faiths Network, Bellwether International, Mosaic Middle East, and the Religious Freedom Institute. Disappointingly the UK Government did not do this, outside of responses to the parliamentary questions.

### International freedom of religion or belief (FoRB)

Our longstanding commitment to FoRB also extends to campaigning for the rights of religious people to their beliefs, as well as humanists. It was the subject of numerous meetings and a great deal of correspondence with the FCDO and with Labour's Shadow Foreign Affairs team. We also were regular participants at meetings of the APPG on Freedom of Religion or Belief and the UK FoRB Forum (where our Chief Executive remains on the steering group). Our Director of Public Affairs and Policy also attended an all-day conference on Digital Persecution organised by the Christian FoRB charity Open Doors.

Our Chief Executive was invited to join the FCDO steering group for the Ministerial on Freedom of Religion or Belief being hosted in July. At the event itself, we organised a stand and three separate fringe events in the main venue, which is two more than any other organisation. We also co-organised five fringe events in Parliament, and secured humanist participation in several events in the main programme. Our Chief Executive (in his capacity as President of Humanists International) spoke at the opening ceremony,

alongside the Prince of Wales (now King), Foreign Secretary (now ex-Prime Minister), and major global religious leaders, including the Archbishop of Canterbury and Chief Rabbi.

We continued to speak out about the harms perpetuated by blasphemy laws around the world. Ahead of a Commons debate on FoRB and the Commonwealth, we published research showing that Commonwealth countries, and countries formerly part of the British Empire, are much more likely to have blasphemy laws than all others. APPG on FoRB Chair Jim Shannon MP (DUP) quoted the statistics in his opening speech.

In December, Humanists International published the *2022 Freedom of Thought Report*, highlighting persecution of the non-religious around the globe. We briefed parliamentarians and the media about its release, which covers the devastating impact that theocratic or anti-democratic laws, discriminatory social mores, and restrictions on freedom of thought and expression can have on the lives of non-religious people.

We used our regular platform at the UN Human Rights Council to highlight FoRB issues, including the case of Mubarak Bala and the need to protect non-religious Afghans. We also continued to enjoy good relations with the United States Embassy, with whom we share common policy on FoRB.

#### Defending free expression

After our patron Sir Salman Rushdie was stabbed at an event in New York in August, we issued an immediate statement in support of him. Our Chief Executive was interviewed by *Channel 4 News*, *Sky News* twice, the *Mail Online* (video interview via Reuters), *Times Radio*, LBC twice, BBC 5 Live, and the BBC World Service. He was also quoted by *The Times*, *National*, *Daily Record*, *Irish Examiner*, *Irish Mirror*, *The Australian*, and over 150 Press Association articles, and was a guest on the Daily Mail's *Sarah Vine's Femail Half Hour*. Our Director of Public Affairs and Policy was interviewed by CTV in Canada.

In October, we co-organised 'An Evening for Salman Rushdie' live-streamed event with writers' advocacy groups English PEN and PEN International, the British Library, Index on Censorship, ARTICLE 19, Penguin UK, and friends of Rushdie. Speakers included Nigella Lawson and Alan Yentob.

#### Abolishing blasphemy laws (Northern Ireland)

We stayed active throughout the year in relation to our stalled campaign in Northern Ireland to abolish the blasphemy law. At last count, we had won both support from the relevant ministers to bring forward a Bill and sufficient support from MLAs to pass it. However, the Northern Ireland Assembly was not operational due to Brexit-related disagreements.

We remained vigilant about *de facto* prohibitions on blasphemy in parts of the UK where it was no longer proscribed in law. We responded to the Independent Monitor for the Press (IMPRESS) public consultation on proposed changes to its Standards Code and guidance for newspapers and magazines. We highlighted that examples in the guidance described a total prohibition on blasphemy, well below what was intended by the wording of 'not encourag[ing] hatred or abuse against any group based on their protected characteristics'. The examples instead prohibited all religious 'offence'. We also explained that the guidance incorrectly identified the protected characteristic in the

Equality Act 2010 as 'religion' when in fact it is properly 'religion or belief' (which includes the non-religious).

## **Ethical issues and global challenges**

Our policy continues to emphasise a number of areas where humanists, and humanist thinking, can make unique contributions to public debate. Notably in 2022 this led to the following actions.

### The environment

Humanist Climate Action (HCA), our network of volunteers who campaign on ecological issues, called for the UK Government action to tackle plastic pollution by responding to two consultations launched by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which proposed to ban bio-based, compostable, and biodegradable single-use plastic items. It also responded to a UK Government consultation on new Biodiversity Net Gain regulations and its 2030 Strategic Framework for International Climate and Nature Action, in both cases calling for the plans to be strengthened.

HCA further responded to a Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) consultation to say the UK must strengthen its proposed environmental targets to protect against the further degeneration of our biodiversity, woodland cover, and air quality.

### Animal welfare

The humanist commitment to improved treatment of sentient animals is featured more prominently in our new strategy, which endorses the World Organisation for Animal Health's Five Freedoms for Animals under human control as a basis for policy engagement with officials. As a religion or belief-specialised human rights charity, we take further interest in the intersection of animal welfare policy with religion or belief, and advocate strongly alongside animal welfare charities for the closure of loopholes to animal welfare legislation relating to religious slaughter. We were pleased to see that a DEFRA consultation we had responded to found 97% of respondents supported introducing labelling for non-stunned meat. We hope this will lead to proposals for reform in 2023.

### International human rights

We were one of the first British organisations to raise alarm bells about unfolding events in Iran following the state's murder of a young girl, Mahsa Amini, for 'improper hijab'. We released a statement from our Vice President, Shaparak Khorsandi (who is from Iran), which was quoted in the *Huffington Post* in support of the Woman, Life, Freedom protests. We regularly covered the unfolding events, voicing support for the brave protesters and condemning the actions of the Iranian regime.

In addition to our many UN Human Rights Council interventions on FoRB detailed above, we urged the UN to keep the pressure on Iran to abolish the use of the death penalty for blasphemy and apostasy and to end its persecution of religious and non-religious minorities, highlighting the case of Swedish-Iranian researcher Dr Ahmadsheza Djalali who was arrested and sentenced to death on false charges of espionage.

#### **4. Humanists UK is respected for our expertise and professionalism and recognised as the leading national voice for the non-religious**

We continued to be the go-to national organisation for the non-religious and for information about humanism, and were frequently sought out by the media for comment on press stories in this capacity. In fact, 2022 was our best ever year for media coverage, with our quotations featuring in 373 distinct articles in major national or international publications. Our biggest story of the year related to the publication of the 2022 Census results for England and Wales in October. The headline figures were that those ticking 'No religion' jumped from 25% to 37%, while the number of people ticking 'Christian' in England and Wales has fallen from 59% to 46%. In Wales, 'No religion' jumped from 32% to 47%, while those ticking 'Christian' fell from 58% to 44%. The results were pleasing, given our campaign to encourage non-religious people to tick 'No religion' instead of the religion they might associate with their culture, upbringing, or schooling. We received blanket coverage on this.

Our Director of Understanding Humanism was invited to speak to members of the European Humanist Professionals about religious education in the UK and successful approaches to teaching about humanism.

Our high-level engagement with government departments in various nations of the UK and across the crown dependencies continued to show that we are taken seriously as the voice of a large community in the UK. We have good relations with the FCDO in particular and our strong standing was reflected in our very significant presence at the UK Ministerial on Freedom of Religion or Belief, including sharing a stage at the opening ceremony with the Foreign Secretary (later Prime Minister) and Prince of Wales (now King). We also continued to enjoy warm relations with the Welsh Government, and attended meetings chaired by First Minister Mark Drakeford MS on matters relating to the cost of living crisis across Wales and how all communities could contribute.

#### **5. Humanists UK is an expanding, financially healthy, and sustainable movement**

##### Our fundraising

Having outperformed expectations of our fundraising in the two years of the pandemic, we ran into difficulty early in 2022 as the impact of a cost of living crisis began to hit home. Our analysis was that donors were on average giving less than they did previously, and less frequently, than prior to March 2022, and that donors who made smaller donations were the most likely to withhold donations altogether due to concerns about the impact of inflation and energy bills on their household finances. We convened a group of dozens of fundraising professionals from across the voluntary sector to discuss the macroeconomic picture, confirming that similar trends were being noticed across charities. We also observed an uptick of membership cancellations, which generally coincided with announcements relating to the energy price cap. Hard work by our fundraising team to increase retention and recruitment led to a big turnaround: we ended 2022 with our retention rate at its highest level in our history, and

well above sector averages. As a result, we put in place numerous plans to mitigate the impact of the economic downturn on our programmes and our work.

As ever we remained extremely grateful to all our members and donors for giving whatever they could, when they could. We were also especially grateful to those donors who responded by increasing their regular gifts later in the year in response to our appeal citing these trends. We also notified members of an increase in the basic membership fee at the tail of the year, having resisted implementing inflation-linked rises since 2018. These measures, combined with an unexpectedly successful September membership appeal (in fact, our best ever such appeal), meant we were able to go into 2023 without cutting any programmes of work. This was a success in spite of adversity.

### People and systems

Our new People department grew to better support our 35 staff, 52 consultants, and over 549 volunteers across the UK as a major strategic priority for us. It also continued to drive forward our agenda to improve Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) within our organisation and our movement.

Our IT department had another extremely busy year. This included supporting remote working and ICT needs across the full workforce, as well as working on several major projects. Major developments included a server move, developing a new 'celebrant availability checker' to assist clients with booking celebrants in Northern Ireland, major behind-the-scenes changes to our systems to support our branches pilot; a new and faster system for collecting petition signatures; new membership and income dashboards and toolsets to support in-depth fundraising analysis; new processes and systems supporting the work of Faith to Faithless; and significant amounts of work relating to our membership scheme and price changes. As well as this, work with the communications team on the next Humanists UK website continued through the year.

## **Financial Review**

We ended the year with a deficit of £142,855. This was due to the combination of a deficit of unrestricted funds of £165,085 plus a £22,201 surplus of restricted funds. Legacy income was nearly half that of the previous year at £302k. Though our legacy income fluctuates significantly, we assume we will continue to benefit from a modest number of legacies throughout the course of our five-year strategy and are happy to report that the 2022 legacy income fell within the range anticipated.

Grant income in furtherance of pastoral support resumed in 2022, following a pause in 2021 during which resources were devoted to post-covid recovery. Restricted donations continued to fund our dedicated Assisted Dying Campaign and our Campaign against Faith Schools.

Membership and unrestricted donations income both performed in line with budgets, though the staff time devoted to fundraising and membership development increased in order to achieve our overall 3% growth in income. We had to spend more time fundraising in order to achieve this and high inflation meant that our rate of growth did not produce more buying power for our activities.

Expenditure continued to be closely monitored to make savings where possible in the face of inflation. Expenditure on charitable activity increased by 16%, reflecting both inflationary pressures plus new areas of investment, which included additional campaigning staff, coordination of non-religious pastoral care, the recruitment and development of volunteers, and in the area of HR.

Our five-year strategy is now well underway and we plan to significantly draw down on our funds, leveraging expenditure to make long-lasting change in public policy, in the public's understanding of humanism, and in the ability of non-religious people to live happier, confident and more ethical lives. Given the uncertain wider economic outlook, this is a fortunate position to be in and we are grateful to everyone involved in making it so.

## **Reserves**

Our reserves are unrestricted free funds held long term for precautionary purposes. The Board considers that the reserves held by Humanists UK should be sufficient to:

- allow us to continue our work in the event of a temporary downturn in income streams. Such concerns might include: an absence of any legacy income for a few years (which, while we deliberately do not budget for legacy income, might restrict a number of activities from being undertaken), a decline in voluntary income, or a failure to increase income at the budgeted rate, and other risks identified annually in the risk register;
- take advantage of an unforeseen opportunity: an item of news, for example, which could trigger a publicity campaign, or an opportunity to change policy through campaigning;
- meet an unforeseen need: a legal challenge, for example, or a sudden need for a significant IT systems change.

Humanists UK will therefore hold an upper limit of four months' annual expenditure and a lower limit of three months' expenditure in reserves to cover these emergencies. All other liquid and near liquid assets are available to fund those activities identified in Humanists UK's Strategic Plan.

We de-designated the building fund (£400,000) given the challenging wider economic environment and decision to renew the lease on the current office for three years.

At the end of the year total funds held amounted to £2,904,388 of which £140,824 were held for restricted purposes and £1,806 were represented by the Association's tangible fixed assets which can only be realised on their disposal. The financial assets of the Association were £2,902,582, currently more than sufficient to meet the requirements of our reserves policy (three months budgeted expenditure being £745k). For this reason we have decided to maintain our deficit budget for 2023-2025.

## **Fundraising Policy**

Our approach to fundraising reflects that supporters are at the heart of what we do, and fundraising materials are designed to ensure that donors and potential donors

understand that they can withdraw from fundraising communications, or any other communications, at any time, simply and without fuss. We do not use fundraising services, consultants, or external professional fundraisers to undertake fundraising activities on our behalf, and we do not sell or licence data to (or buy data from) any external agencies or third parties. We send a weekly e-newsletter to subscribers (which they can unsubscribe from) sharing information about our charitable work and fundraising activities. All new marketing materials are checked to comply with the Fundraising Code of Practice as part of an internal publications sign-off procedure.

We host a range of events throughout the year. Fundraising events are explicitly billed as such. Events are closely monitored at internal meetings before and after every event, and detailed profit and loss registers are kept for large events. We will never exert undue pressure on those invited to attend an event or to donate. All income and expenditure related to volunteer-led fundraising is reported to the appropriate line manager within the staff team, and annual statements are approved by both the volunteer and the responsible manager.

We take very seriously our responsibility and make our best efforts not to approach or pressure vulnerable people to support our work. We take a robust approach to complaints about fundraising, whether in person, or online, or by another medium; these are promptly followed up by the responsible officers, their line managers, or by a member of the Board (as appropriate).

## **Investment policy and objectives**

The Board's investment policy is to generate the highest possible returns over the long term, consistent with our risk appetite and appropriate protection for our capital, so as to maximise the resources that can be expended on our charitable objectives. We have short and long-term investment policies that reflect our needs over different timeframes. Monitoring of the investment performance takes place through regular investment reports and investment performance results are reported and discussed at Board and Finance and Audit Committee meetings and compared to industry benchmarks where applicable.

We entered the year with funds invested as cash deposits with Flagstone, which we retained through 2022. We also held a portfolio consisting of units held with Barclays (Charity Fund) and with BNY Mellon (Newton SRI Fund for Charities). This blend reflects the risk appetite necessary given the planned utilisation of funds over the course of our new strategic period (to 2025).

## **Risk management**

The Board is satisfied that appropriate systems and procedures have been established to identify and manage the major risks faced by the Association. They have developed a comprehensive risk management policy to ensure that all important risks are evaluated and appropriate mitigating action taken. Governance and management, operational, financial, legal and other risks are reviewed annually by the Board and continually monitored by the senior management team who take responsibility for implementation of the policies and procedures identified to reduce risks.

Corrective actions are based on the likelihood of particular events occurring and how critical the consequences would be. Annual risk reviews include considerations of

operating plan activities, finance, insurance, trademark, office building, fire, health and safety, and terms and conditions of employment of staff. Significant potential risks identified were the reputational and legal risks associated with front-line service provision, reliance on core specialist staff, compliance risks with regulatory frameworks such as data protection, and operational risks as a result of poor media relations or insufficient income generation. Actions taken to mitigate risks included a revised fundraising strategy that is able to adapt to the challenging environment we face, the creation of a Head of People role in 2022 to ensure better in-house practice, improved staff & volunteer inductions and support, plus ongoing work to draw together our policies & processes to ensure best practice across the charity.

## **Future Plans**

We are mid-way through our five-year plan and plan to significantly spend down our funds in order to see real progress across a range of areas. We will devote more resources to our apostate support programme, *Faith to Faithless*, including the launch of a helpline as well as increased asylum support and peer support activities. We are investing more in supporting our network of celebrants (and will continue to campaign for legal recognition of Humanist weddings in England & Wales). Other campaigns include Assisted Dying and the Campaign against Faith Schools, where we utilise various tools, including legal cases, to pursue our aim of a fairer society for all. The Branches Pilot Project will continue to build our network of volunteers, whose energy and expertise we are grateful to draw on across all of our work.

## **Statement of Directors' Responsibilities**

Humanists UK's Board are directors of the company for the purposes of company law and are responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable company and charity law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the Association for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the principles of the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Association will continue to operate.

The Directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Association and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Association and hence

taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Association's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The Directors confirm that, in the case of each of the persons who are Directors at the date of this report, the following applies:

- so far as each Director is aware, there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the Company's auditors in connection with preparing their report) of which the Company's auditors are unaware; and
- each Director has taken steps to make herself/himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Company's auditors are aware of that information.

### **Auditors**

In accordance with S485 of the Companies Act 2006, a resolution proposing the reappointment of Knox Cropper LLP as auditors will be put to the General Meeting.

**On behalf of the Board: Neil Hawkins, Chair, 13 May 2023**

# **Independent auditor's report to the members of the British Humanist Association for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022**

## **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of the British Humanist Association (the 'charitable company', operating as Humanists UK) for the year ended 31 December 2022 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2022 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland'; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## **Independent auditor's report to the members of the British Humanist Association for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (cont.)**

### **Other information**

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the

## **Independent auditor's report to the members of the British Humanist Association for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (cont.)**

small companies' exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Directors.

### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- The Charitable Company is required to comply with both company law and charity law and, based on our knowledge of its activities, we identified that the legal requirement to accurately account for restricted funds was of key significance.
- We gained an understanding of how the charitable company complied with its legal and regulatory framework, including the requirement to properly account for restricted funds, through discussions with management and a review of the documented policies, procedures and controls.
- The audit team, which is experienced in the audit of charities, considered the charitable company's susceptibility to material misstatement and how fraud may occur. Our considerations included the risk of management override.
- Our approach was to check that restricted income was properly identified and separately accounted for and to ensure that only valid and appropriate

## **Independent auditor's report to the members of the British Humanist Association for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (cont.)**

expenditure was charged to restricted funds. This included reviewing journal adjustments and unusual transactions.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

### **Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken, so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report or for the opinions we have formed.

Richard Billingham (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
For and on behalf of Knox Cropper LLP, Statutory Auditor  
65 Leadenhall Street  
London  
EC3A 2AD

13 May 2023

## Statement of Financial Activities including the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 December 2022

		<b>Funds 2022</b>			<b>Funds 2021</b>		
	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Restricted £</b>	<b>Unrestricted £</b>	<b>Total 2022 £</b>	<b>Restricted £</b>	<b>Unrestricted £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>							
- Legacies and donations	2	182,907	1,115,105	1,298,012	156,469	1,231,063	1,387,532
- Other trading activities		-	-	-	-	-	-
- Investments	3	-	8,432	8,432	-	8,536	8,536
- Charitable activities	4	-	1,301,802	1,301,802	-	1,297,248	1,297,248
<b>Total</b>		<u>182,907</u>	<u>2,425,339</u>	<u>2,608,246</u>	<u>156,469</u>	<u>2,536,847</u>	<u>2,693,316</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>							
- Raising funds	5	-	(217,066)	(217,066)	-	(183,015)	(183,015)
- Charitable activities	6,7	(160,706)	(2,315,155)	(2,475,861)	(166,921)	(1,970,044)	(2,136,965)
<b>Total</b>		<u>(160,706)</u>	<u>(2,532,221)</u>	<u>(2,692,927)</u>	<u>(166,921)</u>	<u>(2,153,059)</u>	<u>(2,319,980)</u>
<b>Net gains/(losses) on investments</b>	10	<u>-</u>	<u>(58,204)</u>	<u>(58,204)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,786</u>	<u>11,786</u>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		22,201	(165,085)	(142,885)	(10,452)	395,574	385,122
<b>Transfers between funds</b>		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		22,201	(165,085)	(142,885)	(10,452)	395,574	385,122
<b>Balances brought forward at 1 January</b>		<u>118,623</u>	<u>2,928,650</u>	<u>3,047,273</u>	<u>129,075</u>	<u>2,533,076</u>	<u>2,662,151</u>
<b>BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 DECEMBER</b>		<u>140,824</u>	<u>2,763,565</u>	<u>2,904,388</u>	<u>118,623</u>	<u>2,928,650</u>	<u>3,047,273</u>

All amounts relate to continuing activities.

## Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2022

	Notes	2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
Office equipment	9		1,806		8,903
Investments	10		<u>2,016,264</u>		<u>2,071,489</u>
			2,018,070		2,080,392
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Debtors	11	118,492		173,864	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>871,635</u>		<u>876,766</u>	
		990,127		1,050,630	
<b>LIABILITIES</b>					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>( 103,809)</u>		<u>( 83,749)</u>	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			<u>886,318</u>		<u>966,881</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			<u>2,904,388</u>		<u>3,047,273</u>
Represented by					
<b>FUNDS :</b>					
Unrestricted	13		2,763,564		2,928,650
Restricted	14		<u>140,824</u>		<u>118,623</u>
<b>Total Funds</b>			<u>2,904,388</u>		<u>3,047,273</u>

The accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act relating to small companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard 102.

**Approved by the Directors on 13 May 2023 and signed on their behalf by:**

Neil Hawkins \_\_\_\_\_ Hon. Chair

Ann O'Connell \_\_\_\_\_ Hon. Treasurer

Company number: 00228781

## Statement of Cash Flows for the year ending 31 December 2022

### Statement of Cash Flows

		<b>2022</b> <b>£</b>	<b>2021</b> <b>£</b>
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	24	<u>( 7,436)</u>	<u>288,816</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Dividends and interest from investments		8,432	8,536
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		( 3,148)	-
Proceeds from sale of investments		-	-
Purchase of investments		-	( 748,446)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		<u>5,284</u>	<u>( 739,910)</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		( 2,152)	( 451,094)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		2,188,023	2,639,117
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	25	<u><u>2,185,871</u></u>	<u><u>2,188,023</u></u>

# **Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022**

## **1. Accounting policies**

### **Basis of Preparation**

These Financial Statements are presented in pounds sterling and have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (the Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Humanists UK meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. The UK continues to face economic uncertainty but, because of our prudent reserves policy, we are in a better relative position than some other charities, but financial uncertainty does remain. Being almost completely reliant on individual donors and members for our income, we keep a concerned eye on the increasing burden on households' cost of living in the UK.

### **Short term debtors and creditors**

Debtors are recognised when the Charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably, and it is probable that the income will be received. Creditors are recognised when the Charity has a present legal or constructive obligation resulting from a past event to make payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

### **Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty**

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty are detailed in the above accounting policies where applicable.

### **Prepayments & Accruals**

Prepayments and accruals less than £100 have not been taken into consideration.

### **Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation**

All tangible assets costing more than £500 were capitalised and all tangible assets are valued at historic cost. Provision is made for depreciation on tangible fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life.

Office Equipment: 20% p.a. straight line

Computer equipment:	33 1/3% p.a. straight line
Office fixtures & fittings:	10% p.a. straight line

### **Fixed asset investments**

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. The statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on the revaluations and disposals throughout the year.

Realised gains and losses on investments are arrived at by comparing the net sale proceeds with the market value at the end of the previous financial year. Unrealised gains and losses represent the difference between the market value of investments still held at the end of the financial year with their value at the beginning of the year or with their cost if purchased subsequently.

### **Value Added Tax**

The Charity is registered for VAT and where applicable amounts are included net of VAT.

### **Funds**

Unrestricted funds are those funds which can be used at the trustees' discretion. Restricted Funds are those funds where application is restricted by conditions set by the donor. Designated Funds are those funds, which have been earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

### **Deferrals Policy**

Income is recognised when all the following criteria are met:

- Control over the rights or other access to the economic benefit exists
- It is more likely than not that the economic benefits will pass to the Association
- The monetary value of the income can be measured reliably.

### **Grants Receivable**

Revenue grants are credited to incoming resources on the earlier of the date they are received or the date they are receivable, unless they relate to a specific future period, in which case they are deferred. Capital grants for the purchase of fixed assets are credited to restricted incoming resources when they become receivable. Depreciation on the related fixed assets is charged against the restricted fund.

### **Donations and Legacies**

Donations and legacies are recognised as income when the Association becomes unconditionally entitled to receive them, and when the receipt is probable and its value can be predicted with reasonable accuracy.

## **Charitable Activities**

Costs of charitable activities include direct expenditure and an apportionment of overhead, governance and support costs as shown in note 7.

## **Allocation of Overhead, Governance and Support Costs**

Overhead and support costs are incurred centrally across the range of our activities throughout the year. Governance costs comprise all costs involving the public accountability of the Charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice. These include costs related to statutory audit. All these costs have been apportioned between charitable activities on the basis of staff time or office space depending on the nature of the cost. The trustees consider this to be a reasonable reflection of the utilisation of resources.

## **Pensions**

The Charity contributes to various defined contribution pension schemes on behalf of employees and, as the charity's liability is limited to paying amounts as they fall due, the pension charge reflected in the accounts represents the amount payable for the year.

## 2. Legacies, grants and donations

	<b>2022</b>			<b>2021</b>
	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Donations and Gift Aid	182,907	812,415	995,322	830,221
Grants	-	-	-	14,320
Legacies	-	302,690	302,690	542,991
	<u>182,907</u>	<u>1,115,105</u>	<u>1,298,012</u>	<u>1,387,532</u>

In the preceding year Donations and Gift Aid included £142,149 restricted income plus £14,320 restricted grants from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

## 3. Investment income

	<b>2022</b>			<b>2021</b>
	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Interest	-	8,432	8,432	8,536
Dividends	-	-	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>8,432</u>	<u>8,432</u>	<u>8,536</u>

## 4. Income from charitable activities

	<b>2022</b>			<b>2021</b>
	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Subscriptions	-	887,605	887,605	879,373
Celebrants' training	-	169,282	169,282	201,534
Celebrants' accreditation fees	-	150,325	150,325	126,414
Marriage administration fees	-	26,800	26,800	16,700
Events & activities	-	47,059	47,059	36,797
Sales of literature & merchandise	-	8,481	8,481	15,746
Education	-	4,625	4,625	12,097
Pastoral support	-	746	746	188
Sundry income	-	6,879	6,879	8,400
	<u>-</u>	<u>1,301,802</u>	<u>1,301,802</u>	<u>1,297,248</u>

## 5. Cost of raising funds

	<b>2022</b>			<b>2021</b>
	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Fundraising costs	-	( 205,036)	( 205,036)	( 177,313)
Investment manager's fees	-	( 3,891)	( 3,891)	( 3,270)
Purchase of merchandise	-	( 8,139)	( 8,139)	( 2,432)
	-	( 217,066)	( 217,066)	( 183,015)

## 6. Analysis of costs of charitable activities

	<b>2022</b>		
	<b>Direct Costs</b>	<b>Support Costs</b>	<b>Total</b>
Education and Public Awareness	( 389,765)	( 336,336)	( 726,102)
Humanist Ceremonies	( 396,266)	( 118,623)	( 514,889)
Humanist Care	( 138,413)	( 82,674)	( 221,087)
Public Affairs & Policy	( 500,559)	( 291,151)	( 791,710)
Activities for Members and Partner Groups	( 132,205)	( 89,869)	( 222,074)
	( 1,557,208)	( 918,653)	( 2,475,861)

	<b>2021</b>		
	<b>Direct Costs</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Total</b>
Education and Public Awareness	( 385,840)	( 261,470)	( 647,310)
Humanist Ceremonies	( 273,875)	( 139,922)	( 413,797)
Humanist Care	( 101,969)	( 83,847)	( 185,816)
Public Affairs & Policy	( 418,347)	( 277,699)	( 696,046)
Activities for Members and Partner Groups	( 134,952)	( 59,044)	( 193,996)
	( 1,314,983)	( 821,982)	( 2,136,965)

## 7. Analysis of support and governance costs

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Staff costs	( 566,092)	( 435,723)
Rent and rates	( 109,751)	( 120,882)
Repairs, maintenance & utilities	( 21,964)	( 11,209)
Postage and stationery	( 16,494)	( 8,102)
ICT	( 71,740)	( 64,537)
Irrecoverable VAT	( 29,957)	( 64,207)
Subscriptions	( 4,489)	( 4,940)
Bank charges & interest	( 53,890)	( 69,105)
Depreciation	( 10,245)	( 10,663)
Other costs	( 20,705)	( 22,347)
Governance	<u>( 13,326)</u>	<u>( 10,267)</u>
	<u>( 918,653)</u>	<u>( 821,982)</u>

Support costs have been apportioned between categories of charitable activity according to whether they are overheads or centrally incurred expenditure on charitable activities. Overheads have been apportioned in relation to the office space occupied by each area of activity, and centrally incurred expenditure on charitable activities has been apportioned in relation to the staff time employed in each area of activity. The trustees consider this provides a reasonable approximation to the utilisation of resources.

Increased staff costs partly reflects the creation of a new senior management role supervising our volunteer support, ceremonies and humanist care networks, created in late-2021.

### Governance costs

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Audit fee- current year	( 6,757)	( 5,250)
- previous year underprovision	-	-
Other professional expenses	( 13)	( 13)
Trustee meeting expenses	<u>( 6,556)</u>	<u>( 5,004)</u>
	<u>( 13,326)</u>	<u>( 10,267)</u>

## 8. Staff costs

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Wages and salaries	1,376,463	1,131,362
Social security costs	153,027	118,065
Pension contributions	<u>98,630</u>	<u>61,996</u>
Total payroll costs	1,628,120	1,311,423
Staff recruitment	17,579	20,818
Temporary staff	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>1,645,698</u>	<u>1,332,241</u>
Average number of employees (FTE)	33	29
Average number of employees	35	30

New staff posts in 2022 were introduced to do more work on our pilot of a new branch structure, coordination of non-religious pastoral care, the recruitment and development of volunteers, and in the area of HR.

Key management personnel (£531,117) (2021: £479,046) includes Chief Executive, Director of Communications & Development, Director of IT, Director of Operations, Director of Public Affairs & Policy, Director of Understanding Humanism, Director of Ceremonies, Head of Humanist Care (recruited mid-2021) and Head of People (recruited mid-2021).

One employee earned in excess of £60,000 and that salary fell in band £90,000 to £100,000. 2021: one employee (£80,000-£90,000 band).

## 9. Tangible assets

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Office Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment</b>		
Cost at 1 January	106,975	106,975
Additions	3,148	-
Disposals	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
As at 31 December	<u>110,123</u>	<u>106,975</u>
Depreciation at 1 January	( 98,072)	( 87,409)
Charge for the year	( 10,245)	( 10,663)
Disposals	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Depreciation at 31 December	<u>( 108,317)</u>	<u>( 98,072)</u>
Net book value at 31 December	<u>1,806</u>	<u>8,903</u>

## 10. Investments

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Market value at 1 January	760,232	-
Additions	-	748,446
Disposal proceeds	-	-
Realised gains/(losses)	-	-
Unrealised gains/(losses)	<u>( 58,204)</u>	<u>11,786</u>
Market value at 31 December	702,028	760,232
Cash with brokers	<u>1,314,236</u>	<u>1,311,257</u>
Total investments at 31 December	<u>2,016,264</u>	<u>2,071,489</u>
Investments at cost 31 December	<u>748,446</u>	<u>748,446</u>

Investments with a market value in excess of 10% of the portfolio were:

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Barclays Property Income Trust for Charities	324,485	352,044
Newton SRI Fund for Charities	<u>377,543</u>	<u>408,188</u>
Total	<u>702,028</u>	<u>760,232</u>

We continued to hold investments in Barclays Charity Fund and Newton SRI Fund for Charities and retained cash deposits with Flagstone.

## 11. Debtors

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Prepayments	24,069	42,533
Legacies receivable	17,600	7,000
Gift Aid	76,703	123,733
Other accrued income	-	-
Other debtors	<u>120</u>	<u>598</u>
	<u>118,492</u>	<u>173,864</u>

Prepayments are usually primarily event venue costs such as for our Annual Convention, plus rent.

**12. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year:**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Accruals	16,670	14,408
Taxes: Payroll taxes	45,342	31,974
VAT	7,933	20,088
Deferred income	18,792	7,956
Holiday accrual	<u>15,072</u>	<u>9,323</u>
	<u>103,809</u>	<u>83,749</u>

Deferred income usually relates to event ticket sales. All deferred income is recognised in the following financial year.

**13. a) General reserves**

	<b>2022</b>		
	<b>Revaluation Reserve</b>	<b>Accumulated Income</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance at 1 January 2022	-	2,528,650	2,528,650
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	-	( 106,881)	( 106,881)
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	-	( 58,204)	( 58,204)
Transfer on realisation	-	-	-
Transfer from designated funds	-	<u>400,000</u>	<u>400,000</u>
Balance at 31 December 2022	-	<u>2,763,565</u>	<u>2,763,565</u>

	<b>2021</b>		
	<b>Revaluation Reserve</b>	<b>Accumulated Income</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance at 1 January 2021	-	2,138,130	2,138,130
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	-	388,734	388,734
Realised gains/(losses) on investments	-	11,786	11,786
Transfer on realisation	-	-	-
Transfer to designated funds	-	<u>( 10,000)</u>	<u>( 10,000)</u>
Balance at 31 December 2021	-	<u>2,528,650</u>	<u>2,528,650</u>

## b) Designated Reserves

	<b>Balance at 1 January 2022</b>	<b>Incoming Resources</b>	<b>Resources Expended</b>	<b>Transfer</b>	<b>Balance at 31 December 2022</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
Building fund	400,000			( 400,000)	-
Music (the Humanist choirs)	-	785	( 785)	-	-
	<u>400,000</u>	<u>785</u>	<u>( 785)</u>	<u>( 400,000)</u>	<u>-</u>

	<b>Balance at 1 January 2021</b>	<b>Incoming Resources</b>	<b>Resources Expended</b>	<b>Transfer</b>	<b>Balance at 31 December 2021</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
Building fund	390,000	-	-	10,000	400,000
Music (the Humanist choirs)	4,946	-	( 4,946)	-	-
	<u>394,946</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>( 4,946)</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>400,000</u>

## 14. Restricted funds

	<b>Balance at 1 January 2022</b>	<b>Incoming Resources</b>	<b>Resources Expended</b>	<b>Transfer</b>	<b>Balance at 31 December 2022</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
Accord	-	3,466	( 3,466)	-	-
Assisted Dying	49,667	81,797	( 43,032)	-	88,432
Campaign Against Faith Schools	39,505	48,651	( 63,791)	-	24,365
Ceremonies	-	487	( 487)	-	-
Defence Humanists	544	252	( 5)	-	791
Education	-	2,000	( 2,000)	-	-
Faith to Faithless	-	10,937	( 10,937)	-	-
LGBT Humanists	8,369	782	( 1,225)	-	7,926
Local groups	6,716	3,263	( 2,558)	-	7,421
Music (the Humanist choirs)	13,822	7,578	( 9,511)	-	11,889
Northern Ireland development	-	6,000	( 6,000)	-	-
Pastoral Support	-	15,154	( 15,154)	-	-
Public Affairs	-	2,540	( 2,540)	-	-
	<u>118,623</u>	<u>182,907</u>	<u>( 160,706)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>140,824</u>

	<b>Balance at 1 January 2021</b>	<b>Incoming Resources</b>	<b>Resources Expended</b>	<b>Transfer</b>	<b>Balance at 31 December 2021</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
<i>Accord</i>	-	21,751	( 21,751)	-	-
<i>Assisted Dying</i>	53,811	34,159	( 38,303)	-	49,667
<i>Campaign Against Faith Schools</i>	35,489	65,612	( 43,984)	( 17,612)	39,505
<i>Ceremonies</i>	-	468	( 468)	-	-
<i>Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme</i>	-	14,320	( 14,320)	-	-
<i>Defence Humanists</i>	482	84	( 22)	-	544
<i>Education</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Faith to Faithless</i>	3,690	1,475	( 5,165)	-	-
<i>LGBT Humanists</i>	8,381	991	( 1,003)	-	8,369
<i>Local groups</i>	6,898	801	( 983)	-	6,716
<i>Music (the Humanist choirs)</i>	6,307	7,946	( 431)	-	13,822
<i>Northern Ireland development</i>	-	6,000	( 6,000)	-	-
<i>Pastoral Support</i>	14,017	140	( 14,157)	-	-
<i>Public Affairs</i>	-	2,722	( 20,334)	17,612	-
	<u>129,074</u>	<u>156,469</u>	<u>( 166,920)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>118,623</u>

To better reflect the costs of staff posts funded by restricted donations, we have included overheads in the expenditure from 2022 (Assisted Dying & Campaign Against Faith Schools rows). Expenditure on the Campaign Against Faith Schools has also increased due to more staff working in this area.

### **Accord**

Donations to cover the payroll costs of one member of Humanists UK staff to work for the Accord Coalition. This fund closed during 2022.

### **Assisted Dying**

This fund was created in 2018 to manage donations to cover the payroll costs of one member of Humanists UK staff to work on the Assisted Dying campaign with the My Death, My Decision coalition. The fund also includes donations towards assisted dying legal cases.

### **Campaign Against Faith Schools**

Campaign against faith schools appeal funds are restricted to Humanists UK lobbying and campaigning work relating to 'faith' schools and related education campaigns. Funds raised by appeal in excess of the target sought are restricted to the public affairs fund, and are disclosed as a transfer above.

### **Ceremonies**

This fund results from donations given to Humanists UK specifically for ceremonies work.

### **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme**

This fund was created in 2020 to reflect grant income relating to staff who were on furlough during the Coronavirus pandemic.

### **Defence Humanists**

This fund was created in 2012 to manage income and expenditure by the Defence Humanists, which joined as a new section in 2011.

### **Education**

This fund results from legacies and donations given to support Humanists UK's work in promoting the understanding of Humanism in the education sphere. This includes efforts to place a free copy of the *What is Humanism? How Do You Live Without a God? And Other Big Questions for Kids* in every primary school in Britain.

### **Faith to Faithless**

This fund was created in 2015 to manage income and expenditure in support of our Faith to Faithless programme, which helps people who are leaving religions. This is part of our Humanist Care work.

### **LGBT Humanists**

This fund was created in 2012 to manage income and expenditure by GALHA (now LGBT Humanists) which joined Humanists UK as a section in 2012.

### **Local groups**

This fund is for activities relating to the development of local humanist groups, including branches.

### **Music**

This fund was initiated in 2010 by a donation from Alec Reed to fund a composer for two years and to establish the Humanists UK choirs on a secure footing. Current income derives directly from the activities of the choirs.

### **Northern Ireland Development**

This fund was created in 2017 to support the development of Humanists UK's work in Northern Ireland.

### **Pastoral Support**

This fund was created in 2012 to collect donations supporting our new initiative directed towards providing pastoral support to non-religious people in prison or in hospital. This is part of our Humanist Care work.

## Public Affairs

This fund results from legacies and donations given to support Humanists UK lobbying and campaigning work.

### 15. Operating leases

At 31 December 2022 the Company had the following commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Land and buildings		Other	
	2022	2021	2022	2021
	£	£	£	£
Falling due within one year	10,845	97,608	8,955	8,955
Falling due between one and five years	-	10,845	3,413	12,368
Falling due later than five years	-	-	-	-
	<u>10,845</u>	<u>108,453</u>	<u>12,368</u>	<u>21,323</u>

The commitment in respect of land and buildings reflects the lease on the Association's premises which ends on 10 February 2023. We have not set a provision for any dilapidation costs associated with the end of this lease as we intend to renew the lease. Since the year end a new three-year lease has been agreed on a similar basis to previously, with rent being £92,000 per annum.

### 16. Taxation

Humanists UK is a registered charity and is potentially exempt from tax in respect of income and capital gains received within the categories covered by Part II of the Corporation Taxes Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that such income or gains are exclusively applied to charitable purposes.

### 17. Board members' remuneration and expenses

Ewan Main, a Celebrant was paid £203 in fees & expenses as part of the celebrants training programme. Aside from Ewan Main, no remuneration, directly or indirectly, out of the funds of the charity was paid or is payable for the year to any Board member or to any person known to be connected with any of them.

Board members were reimbursed a total of £5,145 (2021: £229) for travel expenses to attend meetings in connection with their duties. Expenses not reported in Note 18 normally include travel to various events, including public lectures and fundraising events. 2022 was unusually high due to a return to in-person meetings, plus travel costs associated with the AGM which was held in Belfast.

### 18. Capital commitments

There were no capital commitments at 31 December 2022 (2021: nil).

## 19. Pension commitments

The charity contributed to individual defined contribution pension schemes for several employees. The assets of the schemes are held separately from those of the charity in independently administered funds. Total employer's contributions paid in the year were £92,839 (2021: £61,996), the increase being partly due to a change of policy that increased the employer contribution rate.

## 20. Net assets

	<b>2022</b>		
	<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Unrestricted funds	2,018,070	745,494	2,763,564
Restricted funds	-	140,824	140,824
	<u>2,018,070</u>	<u>886,318</u>	<u>2,904,388</u>

	<b>2021</b>		
	<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Unrestricted funds	2,080,392	848,258	2,928,650
Restricted funds	-	118,623	118,623
	<u>2,080,392</u>	<u>966,881</u>	<u>3,047,273</u>

## 21. Reversionary interest

Humanists UK has been bequeathed a reversionary interest in a trust established under the terms of the Will of Christine Cotton, who died on 24 January 2000. The trust assets comprise a property occupied by the Life Tenant, investments and bank accounts. The value of the investments as at 31 May 2021 (last update available) was £44,911 (5 April 2020: £44,369). The trustees have indicated to Humanists UK that the property (bought in 2002 for £85,000) had a value in 2020 of between £145,000 and £158,000 by comparison with similar properties in the locality.

Because Humanists UK cannot predict when it will become entitled to the receipt of this legacy, no accrued income has been reflected in the accounts.

## 22. Related party transactions

Board members are not remunerated but are able to recover out of pocket expenses for attendance at Board meetings, the total amount reimbursed being disclosed in Note 17.

The Chief Executive of Humanists UK is also a Director and Trustee of Humanists International and their President. The Association paid an annual subscription to Humanists International of £29,162 (2021: £25,275).

The Education Campaigns Manager of Humanists UK (Robert Cann) is a member of the Executive of the Accord Coalition. The Accord Coalition used desk space and office facilities at Humanists UK's premises for no charge until February 2022.

The Wales Coordinator is a Director and Trustee of the Religious Education Council, of which Humanists UK is a member and paid £900 in membership fees (2021: £900).

## **23. Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period	( 142,885)	385,122
Depreciation charges	10,245	10,663
(Gains)/losses on investments	58,204	( 11,786)
Dividends and interest from investments	( 8,432)	( 8,536)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	55,372	( 65,768)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<u>20,060</u>	<u>( 20,879)</u>
Net cash provided by/ (used in) operative activities	<u>( 7,436)</u>	<u>288,816</u>

## **24. Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Cash at bank and in hand	871,635	876,766
Cash at brokers	<u>1,314,236</u>	<u>1,311,257</u>
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>2,185,871</u>	<u>2,188,023</u>

## **25. Statutory information**

The British Humanist Association, operating as Humanists UK, is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England. The Association's registered number and registered office address can be found on the Legal and Administrative page of this Annual Report.