



The National Secular Society and the British Humanist Association have backed calls for BBC Radio 4's Thought for the Day slot to be converted into a "philosophy slot", open to non-believers and believers alike. The proposal has been put forward on Open Democracy's Our Beeb website. As part of its "100 ideas for the BBC" series, Philosopher Nigel Warburton writes: "My idea for the BBC going forward is that it should transform the rather tired 'Thought for the Day' into a philosophy slot reflecting on wider issues raised by recent news. That would wake a lot of people up." Suffolk Humanists broadcast a regular T4TD on BBC Radio Suffolk from 1995 to 2008, and no one was struck by lightning.

H4BW

H4BW stands for Humanists for a Better World, a group affiliated to the British Humanist Association. Marilyn Mason, H4BW co-ordinator, explains.



If you think that being a humanist should involve "cooperating with others for the common good", as the BHA's statement of values puts it, you might like to join the interest group Humanists for a Better World. H4BW is a continuation of a long and honourable tradition of humanists working to improve the world, though passing on news and actions via our website, email and Twitter and discussing concerns and issues on Facebook, as we do, are resources that our humanist forebears could never have imagined. But many of the actions we encourage via these newish media are more traditional: writing to or meeting with MPs, writing letters to local and national press, signing petitions, and joining demonstrations. In fact, it was a small group of humanists finding themselves warmly

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Fund-raisers walk through the night



SH&S member **Sophie Lovejoy** and her daughter Tess completed the Shine half marathon night walk in London last month to raise money for Cancer Research UK in memory of Sophie's dad Ian, who died in June, and Tess and Toby's grandma Daphne. Sophie's mum Wendy was also treated for cancer in 2013 and has recovered well. Sophie and Tess aimed to raise £500 but have exceeded that, with their current total at just over £800. Well done you two!

Note that it was the baby-naming for Tess conducted by our former Celebrant **Marie Haworth** that introduced Sophie to our group, which she subsequently joined, then trained as a Celebrant herself.



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welcomed at anti-war demonstrations earlier this century that led to the revival of the Humanist Peace Forum, which later evolved into the broader-based Humanists for a Better World.



Marilyn Mason

The BHA is sometimes asked to support causes such as The Climate Coalition, the Jubilee Debt Campaign and Anti-Slavery International, and H4BW took on working with these on behalf of the BHA, as well as a host of other international ethical and sustainability issues of interest to many humanists: peace and international co-operation, global justice, human rights and the environment. We know that few people have time to be active on all these, and so we see our main functions as circulating relevant information and enabling and encouraging members to take appropriate actions at appropriate times on the issues that most concern them.

There is more information about us at <https://humanism.org.uk/about/h4bw/>, including how to sign up for occasional email updates and alerts, and/or how to follow us on Twitter @humanists4bw and/or join our Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/humanists4abetterworld/>. The next big action coming up will be The People's Climate March on Sunday 29th November, in the build-up to the international climate talks in Paris in December, and we hope to see lots of humanists there.

Heading an inner-city school

Mary Todd, head of a Tower Hamlets primary school, gave a most interesting talk at our September meeting.

Mary gave us a clear understanding of what it's like to be a headteacher in an inner-city school where most of the parents are from a Muslim community. She firstly gave a comprehensive view of where she taught, the constitution of her staff and the types of problems she had to tackle. She emphasised that all religions were taught, but not Humanism*, and her main thrust was to ensure that all her pupils were aware of a different ways of living a religious life. All subjects of the curriculum were taught and an emphasis was put on giving her pupils higher ambitions outside of their

tightly knit community. Thus visits were arranged to places of interest and to businesses in Canary Wharf. However, even when her pupils gained degrees she observed that local businesses did not employ them. A free school has been allowed to open and a high proportion of the children living in or around Canary Wharf sought to go there, making deprivation more of an issue for her school.

Mary said that the main problems had been around sex education and relationships, where she had to work closely with the imam at the mosque and the parents to create a curriculum with which the parents felt comfortable. This had been a demanding task and meant frequent meetings, listening to concerns and constantly adapting to the communities' need. There had also been a demand to teach Bengali as a second language but this had been averted, and now Spanish was taught.

Finally Mary gave us all an understanding of a 'No formal designation monitoring inspection', which was a reaction to a specific complaint from an undisclosed source. It gave the Chief Inspector concerns about aspects of the quality of leadership and management, including the aspects of safeguarding arrangements, inclusion, and provision for pupils spiritual, moral, social, spiritual and cultural development. This experience was very stressful and although the allegations were found to have no basis it left Mary with anxiety about who to trust and whether this could happen again. Also the school community largely didn't understand the need for the inspection and made some members worry that there was something wrong with the leadership even though the school is classified as good. The stress of being a headteacher in areas of deprivation, with largely an immigrant population with a different cultural heritage can be huge.

Elisabeth Thompson

*The recently concluded RE Subject Review, organised by the RE Council for England and Wales, produced a new curriculum framework that, for the first time, puts the teaching of non-religious worldviews such as Humanism on an equal footing to the teaching about religions. This reflects a growing number of local authority RE syllabuses that are similarly inclusive, including Suffolk's.

MN

Committee, 2015-2016

Our AGM had to be postponed from earlier in the year as we were inquorate so it was held before the barbecue in Stutton on August 25th, when a committee was elected. There are a couple of changes.

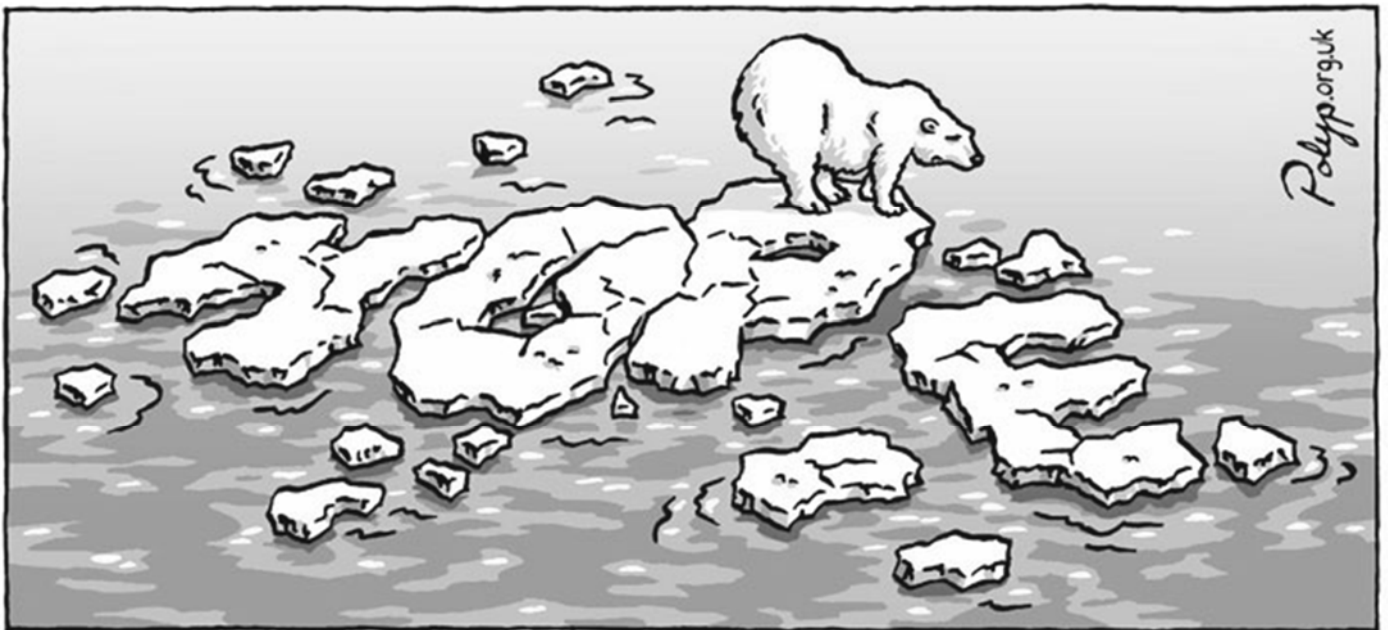
Denis Johnston is now Chairperson, having handed over the Secretary's role to Elisabeth Thompson. John Mellis will continue as our Treasurer and Sue Hewlett and Peter Davidson are committee members. We're still short of one or two people, so if you're interested in helping to run the group, please get in touch. Access to the Internet is helpful, as a lot of communication is by email.

For those of you who don't know who's who, here they are.



Left to right: Denis, Elisabeth, Sue, John and Peter.

The government's broken green promises



Marilyn Mason mentioned the People's Climate March on Sunday 29th November, the eve of the climate talks in Paris. A similar march will take place in Paris on 12th December, when the talks end. Putting pressure on our government couldn't be more important, as they've reduced subsidies for green energy, promoted fracking and planned tax breaks for North Sea oil and gas. The Independent reported, "Climate change is as serious a threat to humanity as nuclear war, according to a report on climate change commissioned by the Foreign Office. Which begs the obvious question – why isn't the Government listening? The report, led by the UK's climate change envoy Professor Sir David King, spelled out some of the indirect threats posed by global warming such as a tripling of food prices, unmanageable levels of migration and an increased risk of terrorism caused by failing states." To join the H4BW group on the London March, get in touch with them (see page 2). I regret that I can't go, for health reasons, but will be writing letters to whoever's involved, including my MP.

Margaret



Suffolk Humanists & Secularists

For the good life, without religion

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Founded in 1991, we're affiliated to The British Humanist Association, The National Secular Society, and Suffolk Inter-Faith Resource. Sympathetic non-members are welcome but by joining us you'll help us to raise awareness of Humanism and Secularism, and to challenge the increasing influence of religion in public life, the arts and the media.

Humanism is an ethical approach to life without religion; humanists think we can be good without God. Secularism is the belief that religion should have no place in civil affairs; that the church and state should be kept separate.

Dates for your diary

Unless otherwise stated, meetings are in the Darwin Room on the 1st floor in Arlington's Brasserie, Museum Street, Ipswich, IP1 1HE. Car parking in one of the nearby car parks. We start at 7.30pm.

Guests are always welcome. If you need or can offer a lift, we'll try to help.

Tuesday 13th October—Guest speaker Ted Bates on Alfred Russel Wallace.

Alfred Russel Wallace (1823 - 1913) was an explorer, naturalist and intellectual who co-discovered the process of evolution by natural selection with Charles Darwin. In January 2013 Wallace's portrait was hung on the stairs of the Natural History Museum's Central Hall, next to the statue of Darwin, after a campaign led by Wallace enthusiast Bill Bailey.

Tuesday 10th November—Elisabeth Thompson will talk about Atheism and War, with war poetry.

Saturday 28th November—Lunch in the Duke of York on the corner of Ipswich Road and Old Barrack Road, Woodbridge. We meet at noon. Please get in touch by the 24th if you plan to come, as we have to book a table. Family and friends welcome.

Tuesday December 8th, TBA.

Suffolk Humanist Ceremonies

01473 658828

Why not join in the conversations on our website (URL below), on Facebook (www.facebook.com/suffolkhands) or Twitter (@suffolkhands)?

Many thanks to Denis for all his hard work as our secretary over the last few years, as well as being our representative on Suffolk's Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education and at Suffolk Inter-Faith Resource, where he's now vice-chairman.

Also huge thanks to Sue and Bill Hewlett for hosting our barbecue, and especially to Bill for barbecuing in the rain! It was all delicious.

www.suffolkhands.org.uk

www.agoodlifewithoutreligion.com