

suffolk Humanist & secularist NEWS

May 2016

Some thoughts on Meetings

Is it just me or has there been a major change in how people get together for face to face meetings?

Are they even necessary any more?

I raise the question because the number of Suffolk Humanist Members attending meetings is now quite small – rarely more than half a dozen or so. These days we generally have discussion groups with a controversial or difficult topic rather than risk having an invited speaker turn up and have no audience.

There are many obvious reasons for this decline in attendance. Many of our members have transport problems and many are also quite elderly. Amongst the younger ones it is changes in work patterns that have a significant effect. When I was young just about everybody worked regular hours during the day and were free for the evenings. Even those on shift work kept regular albeit inconvenient hours.

Today that is no longer the case and for many younger people being able to commit to regular meetings is nearly impossible. Not only do they have to ‘take work home’ but paradoxically despite or perhaps because of modern communications they are often away.

Of course at the same time the things that once have been discussed at

meetings have moved on-line. After all why would anyone want to leave their cosy home on a cold winter’s evening to hear a relatively unknown local speaker when only a click way are world class presentations such as the “TED” talks.

At the same time on-line discussions

Conferences

Both the BHA and the NSS have whzt look to be very interesting conference coming up very soonom also has a very informative website see:

<http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/tombole/s/equipment.html>

Suffolk Interfaith Week...

We provided a stand Suffolk Inter-Faith Week event at the Suffolk County Council Headquarters on Monday 22nd November 2010. We were not alone in being the only non-religious organization that was present. Several schools took part with exhibitions of their RE work and Suffolk Police also had a stand. Although initially it seemed that it would be one of those events where the only visitors were the other stand holders, by lunchtime, when the Mayor of Ipswich gave an address, it had become quite busy. That said it seemed that most visitors were council employees on their lunch break rather than the general public. A surprisingly high proportion of those who stopped to chat mentioned that they had been to a humanist funeral and what a positive experience it had been

Just a reminder...

This year is census year and the BHA is encouraging all humanists to tick the "No religion" box.

BHA CONSULTATION ON WORKING BETTER TOGETHER

The BHA is undertaking a consultation process and we have received the 16 page discussion paper and the 17 page questionnaire addressing a number of issues relating to how the BHA and Groups work together. This is to be completed on a group basis. The deadline is 31st January.

Much of the questionnaire is concerned with collecting simple factual information e.g. age of group, numbers, frequency of meetings etc. but also included are several questions which may radically affect the future structure of the BHA and groups.

Our meeting on Tuesday 11th January will provide an opportunity for members to discuss these and we will attempt to get a consensus for our response.

If you are not able to attend but would like to contribute to our group's response then please email the secretary denisjohnston@btinternet.com and he will send you all the relevant documents. Unfortunately the material is just too voluminous to send to all members by post but could be sent electronically to individuals requesting it.

An example of one of the more contentious questions...

"Some local groups would like to become 'branches' of the BHA. From the viewpoint of your group, and in the context of the strategy, do you think that would be a good idea?"

Yes: Definitely a good idea.

Yes: Probably a good idea.

Neutral.

No: Probably a bad idea.

No: Definitely a bad idea.

What do you think being a "branch" would mean?

Meeting dates...

Tuesday 11th January 2011:
Discussion leading to completion of the BHA consultancy document/

Tuesday 8th February 2011: Machines that Talk – Denis Johnston.

Tuesday March 8th 2011: A history of British humanism from the 19th century, including the local group – Margaret Nelson.

All meetings at 7.30 pm in the lounge,
PINEWOOD COMMUNITY HALL
Laburnum Close
Pinewood
Ipswich, IP8 3SL.

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with Thom Scott-Phillips

