



Labour Humanist Group– CONSTITUTION
Adopted at the AGM of 24th November 2006
Revised 19th April 2007

- 1) TITLE AND AIM. The group shall be called “Labour Humanist Group”. The aims of the group shall be:
 - (a) to spread awareness of humanism and humanists within the Labour Party and to promote humanist and Labour values;
 - (b) seek to ensure the adoption, by the Labour Party, of policies consistent with humanist values;
 - (c) provide a community for Labour Party humanists to act as a social organisation and in the wider community.

- 2) HUMANISM. As a statement of humanist principles, the group endorses the 2002 Amsterdam Declaration by the International Humanist and Ethical Union (annexed to this constitution).

- 3) MEMBERSHIP Any person, who agrees with the aim of the group and is a member or supporter of the Labour Party or a member of a group officially affiliated to the Labour Party, may become a member on paying the annual subscription. No member of the Labour Humanist Group may be a member of a political party other than the Labour Party. The Executive committee may terminate the membership of, or refuse to admit as a member any person whose conduct they consider to be inconsistent with the aims of the group.

- 4) OFFICERS. The officers shall be members of the Labour Party and shall comprise a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. These shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting of the group.

- 5) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The Executive Committee (EC) shall consist of the officers and up to five members to be elected at the AGM. Any vacancy may be filled by the EC subject to confirmation at the next Annual General Meeting. The general business of the group shall be controlled and carried out by the EC whose meetings will be presided over by the Chair or the Vice Chair. It shall meet at least twice a year and at least 10 days’ notice shall be given to committee members. A quorum shall be four members including two officers.



6) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS. From 2007, an AGM shall be held before the 1st of May each year. It shall receive financial accounts and the report of the EC for the year that ended on the previous 31st December. It shall elect officers of the group and members of the EC. At least 21 days' notice shall be given to all members; nominations and notices of resolutions must be received by the secretary at least seven days before the meeting.

7) SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS. A special general meeting may be called by the EC or shall, on receipt of a request signed by not fewer than 15% of the membership, be called by the Secretary within six weeks of receiving such a request. At least 21 days' notice shall be given to all members. Only business stated on the notice convening the Special General Meeting shall be considered.

The quorum for both types of meetings shall be 15% of the membership. In any dispute concerning the affairs of the group an annual general meeting shall be the final authority.

8) FINANCE. The income and property of the group shall be devoted to the promotion of the aims of the group. Officers and members of the EC may not receive payment for their service to the group, though their expenses may be reimbursed. In the event of the group having to be wound up, all funds shall go to the British Humanist Association after the payment of liabilities. The annual subscription to the group shall be set by the AGM. Cheques must be signed by two out of Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer.

9) CONSTITUTION. Amendments to the constitution may only be considered at general meetings, and all members shall be informed at least 21 days in advance of the proposed amendments. To be carried such amendments shall require a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

10) AFFILIATIONS. The group shall seek affiliation to the British Humanist Association and the Labour Party as and when they meet the appropriate affiliation criteria. Affiliation to other bodies may be made by resolution at a general meeting.

Annex – The Amsterdam Declaration 2002

‘Humanism is the outcome of a long tradition of free thought that has inspired many of the world's great thinkers and creative artists and gave rise to science itself.

The fundamentals of modern Humanism are as follows:

1. **Humanism is ethical.** It affirms the worth, dignity and autonomy of the individual and the right of every human being to the greatest possible freedom compatible with the rights of others. Humanists have a duty of care to all of humanity including future generations. Humanists believe that morality is an intrinsic part of human nature based on understanding and a concern for others, needing no external sanction.
2. **Humanism is rational.** It seeks to use science creatively, not destructively. Humanists believe that the solutions to the world's problems lie in human thought and action rather than divine intervention. Humanism advocates the application of the methods of science and free inquiry to the problems of human welfare. But Humanists also believe that the application of science and technology must be tempered by human values. Science gives us the means but human values must propose the ends.
3. **Humanism supports democracy and human rights.** Humanism aims at the fullest possible development of every human being. It holds that democracy and human development are matters of right. The principles of democracy and human rights can be applied to many human relationships and are not restricted to methods of government.
4. **Humanism insists that personal liberty must be combined with social responsibility.** Humanism ventures to build a world on the idea of the free person responsible to society, and recognises our dependence on and responsibility for the natural world. Humanism is undogmatic, imposing no creed upon its adherents. It is thus committed to education free from indoctrination.



5. **Humanism is a response to the widespread demand for an alternative to dogmatic religion.** The world's major religions claim to be based on revelations fixed for all time, and many seek to impose their world-views on all of humanity. Humanism recognises that reliable knowledge of the world and ourselves arises through a continuing process of observation, evaluation and revision.
6. **Humanism values artistic creativity and imagination and recognises the transforming power of art.** Humanism affirms the importance of literature, music, and the visual and performing arts for personal development and fulfilment.
7. **Humanism is a lifeway aiming at the maximum possible fulfilment through the cultivation of ethical and creative living** and offers an ethical and rational means of addressing the challenges of our times. Humanism can be a way of life for everyone everywhere.

Our primary task is to make human beings aware in the simplest terms of what Humanism can mean to them and what it commits them to. By utilising free inquiry, the power of science and creative imagination for the furtherance of peace and in the service of compassion, we have confidence that we have the means to solve the problems that confront us all. We call upon all who share this conviction to associate themselves with us in this endeavour.'

IHEU Congress 2002.