



**Humanist
Society
Scotland**



Our Humanist Future

Strategic Plan of Humanist Society Scotland
2020 to 2023

Humanist Society Scotland



www.humanism.scot

Humanist Society Scotland, Playfair House,
6 Broughton Street Lane, Edinburgh EH1 3LY



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The need for a Humanist voice in Scotland



Maggie Kinloch

The place of Humanism in Scottish public life has shifted significantly in the past thirty years of the existence of Humanist Society Scotland. As Scotland's national charity for Humanists, we have witnessed huge changes in both public policy and everyday life, as well as our own organisational history.

We have seen Humanist ceremonies grow in popularity in Scotland with Humanist marriage now being the most popular choice of belief ceremony in the country, something even we did not expect when our registered celebrants first married couples in 2005.

There is a renewed democratic discourse ever since the establishment of the Scottish Parliament – a fundamental value for Humanists the world over. This has delivered progressive changes including same-sex marriage, protection of children from physical violence and the repeal of Section 28.

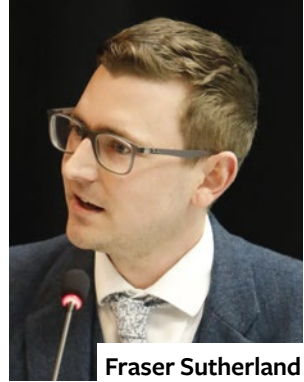
All these successes have a common Humanist principle at their heart – protecting individual autonomy and dignity.

However, there is still much to be done. Scots are denied the right to an assisted death, young people's right to freedom of belief is not respected in our school system and we have the stain of being one of Europe's last remaining countries with a Blasphemy law.

Humanist Society Scotland goes into this new decade with a renewed aim and mission set out in this strategic plan. But our place as the Scottish organisation who speaks out for Humanist values, helps mark key life events in the Humanist tradition, and provides a community for likeminded people remains the same.

Prof Maggie Kinloch FRSE
Chair

Looking to our future with 2020 vision



Fraser Sutherland

This Strategic Plan was developed by our elected board with input from staff to help shape our future work and focus for the next three years.

I am delighted by our trustees' vision and passion for the work of the charity – and their drive to achieve great things is a huge asset to the Society.

This document allows us to review the progress that has been made in our thirty year history and focus on what needs to be done with the next thirty years in mind. This plan sets out a clear focus on our work in being the voice for Humanism that Scotland needs – helping people celebrate their lives and relationships in line with their beliefs, as well as providing more opportunities for members to be at the forefront of our work.

We also recognise our place in the wider world of Humanism and how relatively lucky we are to be in a country where our freedom of expression is not only accepted but also celebrated. It still remains the fact that too many of our friends in other parts of the world face widespread persecution, imprisonment and even death. We are committed to doing all we can to support the work of our partners through Humanists International and the European Humanist Federation. We are delighted to be hosting the General Assemblies of both organisations for the very first time in Scotland in 2022.

Thank you to all our members, celebrants, volunteers, supporters and staff who make all this work possible.

Fraser Sutherland

Chief Executive

Our Vision

**A caring and compassionate
Scotland informed by reason.**





Our Mission

**To be the champion for
Humanism in Scotland.**

Our Values



We will live our values in everything we do. These are at the core of how we act as individuals, collectively as a movement and as a charitable organisation.

Co-operation We will reach out and work with others for positive change and equality.

Integrity We are committed to our Humanist principles and will act honestly.

Reason We will use evidence and thought to guide and direct what we do.

Courage We will be courageous in our work. We will stand up for what we believe is right, and challenge where needed.

Sustainability We will work in a sustainable way that assures our future strength, and seeks to minimise negative impacts on the wider environment.



What we are going to do

These strategic aims provide direction for the work of the charity for its trustees, staff, registered celebrants and volunteers.

We set out our key objectives which we will be working hard to achieve in the next three years. These priorities will ensure we can focus our resources and time in the areas of biggest impact for the benefit of our members and all Humanists in Scotland.

Champion and Influence

As Scotland's national Humanist organisation we are proud of the role we have played in helping to further rational thought, reasoned policy making and in making Scotland a fairer and more equal society.

We will continue to give voice to Humanism and help people share their life-stance in a positive way. We will make sure our voice is heard on important issues of debate.

Aim A: We will champion Humanism and help it flourish in Scotland as part of the global Humanist movement.

Objective 1 We shall connect more members, supporters and partners in the work and aims of the society.

Objective 2 We will provide more volunteering opportunities for members and supporters to engage in and help further the aims of the charity.

Objective 3 We will proactively participate in the global Humanist movement through our membership of Humanists International and the European Humanist Federation.

Aim B: We will influence and shape public policy and civil society using reason and evidence.

Objective 1 We will engage with Government and Parliament on issues which are important to Humanists and encourage our members to be part of public debate.

Objective 2 We will work constructively and in partnership with other organisations who share our key objectives in order to achieve success.

Objective 3 We will work creatively to communicate our key messages in order to engage new supporters and members.

Celebrate and Community

We recognise the important role that Humanist Society Scotland and our far-reaching network of registered celebrants play in people's lives.



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We believe that everyone in Scotland should be able to access ceremonies to mark key life events carried out by someone who shares their beliefs. We will continue to build on the fantastic service offered to couples, families and others through our registered celebrants. We aim to be a world leader in the provision of Humanist ceremonies and build on the hard work put in by celebrants and staff so far. Our charity also acts as a community for people who share a common Humanist approach to life, and we will nurture this community's growth.

Aim C: We will be the most trusted choice for Humanist ceremonies in Scotland.

Objective 1 We will make our services more visible and accessible to an increased number of people.

Objective 2 We will expand our availability to new geographic areas and focus on increasing our diversity.

Aim D: We will work to attract and maintain levels of membership from across Scotland.

Objective 1 We will provide a membership offering that better reflects the interests of our members.

Objective 2 We will provide both national and local events for members and others to engage in Humanist thought and endeavour.

Organisational stability and best practice

In order to achieve our strategic aims set out in this plan, we will also work to ensure that the charity has the resources and expertise needed.

Over the course of this strategic plan we will strengthen and implement sector best practice in our operational duties. This work underpins the major strategic aims of the charity, and without it we would be unable to achieve our goals and vision.



We will...

- ▶ Act in a values-led way in our work
- ▶ Implement best practice in our governance framework
- ▶ Ensure our digital platforms are contemporary and user-friendly
- ▶ Diversify our income base
- ▶ Invest in employee, celebrant and volunteer development
- ▶ Champion equality and diversity in how we work



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Proud to be a member of



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HUMANIST
FEDERATION



Humanists
INTERNATIONAL