



# Newsletter

of the Liberal Democrat Humanist & Secularist Group

February 2007

**HUMANIST & SECULAR  
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**

## Do Religion & Politics mix?

Our Fringe at Harrogate:



**Time:** 6:15 pm, Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March

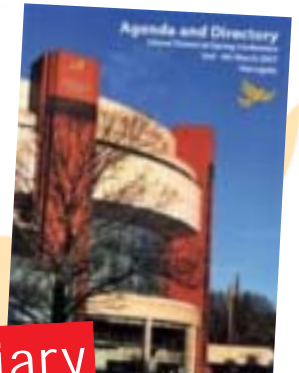
**Place:** Queen's Suite 2 in the Conference Centre

**Speaker:** Martin Horwood, MP for Cheltenham

Once again the Group is planning a strong presence at the Party's Spring Conference in Harrogate (2-4 March).

The topic of our fringe meeting will be "Do Religion & Politics mix?" suggested by the main speaker, Cheltenham MP Martin Horwood.

Once again we will have a stand in the exhibition area. Hopefully we will be recruit as many members as we did there last year! Come along and say Hello at Stand No. 12.



**Date for Your Diary**



● Martin Horwood,  
MP for Cheltenham

### Birmingham One Day Conference

Following the success of our October one day conference in Northampton, we are planning another in June.

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> June 2007

**Place:** The Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham

(Five minutes walk from ➡ New Street.)

**Topic:** Does Secularism foster Lib Dem values?

The day will start at 10:30 am and finish no later than 4:30 pm.

The cost for members will be £15 (*including lunch etc.*) - £20 for non-members. There is disabled access.

For registration information email **Vice Chair, Cllr. Vera Head:**  
[vera.head@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:vera.head@tiscali.co.uk) or phone 01494 727254.

**Campaigning for Humanist &  
Secular views within the Lib Dems**

# SACREs: Why Non-Religious Councillors should take an interest In Religious Education – and How.

Did you know that (in England & Wales) your Local Education Authority has responsibility for overseeing collective worship, Religious Education and the RE syllabus in local schools through its Standing Advisory Council for RE (SACRE).

Did you know that local councillors make up one of the 4 constituent committees of SACRE?

And did you know that polls regularly reveal that something like 65% of young people in our schools are not religious? Most of these pupils have to attend RE lessons, some of them even find

learning about other people's beliefs interesting – but they don't often find their own worldview reflected in RE. You could help to change that.

**The recently published non-statutory National Framework for RE recommended that all pupils study "secular philosophies such as humanism",** but this will not be implemented locally unless there are enough people on SACREs to speak for and advise on humanism. Humanists serve in various capacities (mostly as co-opted members) on many SACREs, but, as full voting members, humanist councillors could do a

lot to improve RE for both religious and non-religious pupils. After all, if non-religious pupils have to learn something about Christianity, Islam, Judaism etc, why shouldn't religious believers learn something about atheist and humanist beliefs and values?

If you'd like to be a councillor representative on your local SACRE, find out more about SACREs and humanist input into RE at the British Humanist Association website (<http://www.humanism.org.uk/site/cms/contentviewarticle.asp?article=1182>) and/or contact Andrew Copson at the BHA (020 7079 3584 or [education@humanism.org.uk](mailto:education@humanism.org.uk)).

## Regional Reps Wanted!

The Group is keen to extend its presence in Regional Parties and in the Scottish & Welsh Lib Dems. We are therefore looking for a Rep. in each State and English Region.

The ideal candidate would be someone who attends their Regional Conferences fairly regularly.

You would *not* be part of the Group's Executive Committee and you would *not be expected to attend committee meetings.*

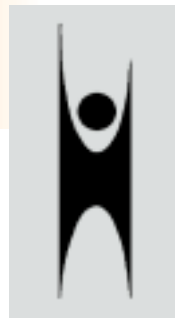
The role would really be very much what you made of it, which could include:

- Acting as a contact point for Group members in your Region/State;
- Co-ordinating submission of appropriate motions to Regional Conferences;
- Recruiting members to the Group/distribution of literature at Regional Conferences.
- Possibly co-ordinating small meetings of like minded Party members in your Region/State.

The Group currently has very little money to spend on this. At most we could fund a limited amount for local printing of centrally designed recruitment leaflets (we would email artwork to you).

To discuss the role informally contact the Group's Chair, Roger O'Brien:  
email [hsld@obrien3.demon.co.uk](mailto:hsld@obrien3.demon.co.uk),  
home phone: 01387 375 468.

Alternatively, if you are going to be at Harrogate phone or text Roger's mobile: 07773 110 272.



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