



LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY

Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 1WB

Telephone: 0116 262 2250

Email: mail@leicestersecularsociety.org.uk

www.leicestersecularsociety.org.uk



The Oldest Secular Society in the World
Formed in 1851

JUNE NEWS 2008

Magna Carta, the Power of the State and David Davis's Resignation

Secularists across the world take a keen interest in civil liberties because of their own persecution at the hands of religiously motivated authoritarian regimes. The issues raised by David Davis's resignation are, therefore, of some concern for LSS members.

The government's victory in the vote on the 42 day detention proposal was the straw that broke Davis's back but his resignation is about much more than that. He will fight the by-election on general libertarian principles – opposing recent extensions of the state's power to control and monitor the activities of citizens through the police. These include the permissible length of pre-charge detention, the extent of CCTV and other surveillance, ID cards and the collection of DNA data.

He argues that the hard-won rights and freedoms of British citizens going back to Magna Carta are being eroded by the government and it is time to make a stand. He has had past associations with Liberty, the civil liberties group.

Davis's decision was taken against the advice of his leader, David Cameron. Cameron has appointed his successor (Dominic Grieve) on a permanent basis. The Conservative Party, despite its block vote against it, is no more unanimous on the 42 day issue than the openly divided Labour Party. Cameron will not commit his party to repealing the measure if it returns to power. Thus, it is not a matter of a libertarian Tory party versus a Stalinist Labour Party. Only the Lib-Dems seem united. If Davis wins the by-election he will return to Parliament as a back-bencher. His decision, therefore, is to be respected as an honourable one with the highest motives – demonstrating a personal integrity that puts other MPs to shame.

One of the major factors in play is that the 42 day provision has been designed to combat the activities of the lunatic

fringe of Islamic fundamentalism. These are the people who would have us secularists roasting in the flames of a bombed out train rather than wait for their god to consign us to the eternal flames of Hell on Judgement Day (not that they lack faith in that outcome, you understand). The majority of the public seems persuaded of this position – almost anything is justifiable if it is likely to lead to the disruption, arrest and conviction of Islamist terrorists. Secularists have reason to agree, but a number of our members are themselves involved in non-violent radical pressure groups that routinely come under the scrutiny of the security forces. Their pictures have been taken, telephones possibly tapped and if they have been arrested during a protest e.g. under misused anti-terrorist legislation, then their DNA is being held by the police.

As ever, the danger of agreeing to repressive measures to combat people you are presently opposed to is that sooner or later these same measures may be turned against you.

There is no natural limit to the number of days suspects should be held without charge. It's all a matter of what is acceptable to the majority of reasonable people - that's us! Being held for up to six weeks without knowing what the charge is seems to this reasonable person to be just too long and getting too close to Kafka territory.

My conclusion, therefore, is that the risk to all our freedoms from the growth of police powers is not something that can be justified by their short-term potential to combat the activities of violently dangerous minorities. While the advantages and disadvantages of each specific measure must be debated and agreed individually, we should maintain a generally healthy scepticism towards arguments for any further extensions of police powers.

Good luck to David Davis.

Harry Perry

Forthcoming Events

Tuesday 17th June, 7.30pm at the Rutland & Derby in Millstone Lane - **'Skeptics in the Pub'** with **Nick Pullar**

Thursday 19th June, 7.30pm at the Hall - members only **IDEAS Group** - John Sargeant will open a discussion on John Rawls' political theory, **"Justice as Fairness"** - the biggest liberal idea since 1945.

Sunday 22nd June, 6.30pm at the Hall - **"A Tour Round the Solar System and It's Future"** - Ann Bonell is a teacher and lecturer in Leicester and is President of Leicester Astronomical Society. Her presentation will illuminate our neighbours in space.

Sunday 29th June, 6.30pm at the Hall - **Headstrong session**

Sunday 6th July, 6.30pm at the Hall - **"Blasphemy and the Law"**. Veronica Matthew, lecturer in law at De Montfort University, brings her knowledge and experience to bear on this topical subject.

Sunday 13th July, 7.30pm at the Hall - **Music Recital for French Horn and Piano**. Simon Locke - French horn. Simon Locke is one of the finest professional horn players in the Midlands. His professional life includes teaching, recording, symphonic and recital work. More details on Page 2. (NB Please note the abnormal time and that this is a paying event - see inside)

Tuesday July 15th, 7.30pm at the Rutland & Derby in Millstone Lane - **'Skeptics in the Pub'** - **The Truth about Mars** with Douglas Ellison

Tuesday, August 19th, 7:30pm at the Rutland & Derby, Millstone Lane - **'Skeptics in the Pub'** - **The Psychology of Anomalous Experiences** presented by Prof Chris French

Puzzle Solutions

Harry forgot to give the answer to April's shaped numbers puzzle last time, so I give here the solutions to both puzzles:

Shaped Number Puzzle

The shaped numbers in the first puzzle were:

36 (square and triangle)

37 (hexagon and star)

91 (triangle and hexagon)

121 (square and star)

169 (square and hexagon)

253 (triangle and star)

The first two were given and the other four were to be found. Note that each possible combination of two of the four shapes occurs.

The answer to May's problem is that the next square and triangle number is **1225** and the next hexagon and star number is **1261**. Geoff Gay solved this and Sam Turner had a good try. They and Martin Ward will receive a little booklet on *Figurate Numbers* that I am preparing.

George Jelliss

Abigail Johnson and Simon Locke present Music for Piano and French Horn

7.30pm Sunday July 13th 2008

The Secular Hall
75 Humberstone Gate
Leicester LE1 1WB

The Horn and Piano Recital on July 13th will start at 7.30pm - welcome from 7.00pm (with a spot of sherry to create the right ambience). I am expecting quite a few horn players to turn up! There are fees involved so the charges will be:

Non-members £6.00
Concessions £4.00
LSS Members £2.00

Programme to include music by Bach, Beethoven, Liszt and Poulenc.

Simon is without doubt one of the best horn players in the Midland region. Currently he is shifting his emphasis from teaching to performing, recording and studio work where he is much in demand. This recital is part of that change.

Abigail Johnson is becoming known as a brilliant accompanist as well as a strong soloist, as her solo pieces in the programme will give elegant testimony.

Michael Gerrard

Do you have smoke coming out of your ears...

as you read the latest speech by Rowan Williams or Cormac Murphy O'Connor? Well the NHS can't help with that but it can help you to stop sucking it in in the first place: Quit now with the **Free NHS Smoking Helpline: 0800 169 0 169**



Jazz in Stone

Eve;

You take the apple unassisted by the serpent
Riffing and scaling immodestly through the verdant foliage
Gislebertus the master of his art caught with his sharpest
chisel, flexing you to those mediaeval rhythms.

Lithe limbs and honey-coloured breasts given life by a
soloist playing from the heart.

Your wayward eye looks forward to expulsion for the sin of
pride

By godly canons, fearing that such vital form would revive
Lazare before due time.

Adam;

Were you tempted by some other fruit or hiding from Eve's
flagrant nakedness?

Gislebertus;

Your timely chords cut in a minor key hold us breathless.

The blessed and the damned weigh lightly on the eye, and
heavenly sights made colourful by your skill linger now,
echoing down the centuries.

Doug Gray © 2008

This is an homage to the only named sculptor of the 12th century CE. Gislebertus worked entirely for the church but the pieces still extant at Autun are almost exclusively secular in execution.

PS. Secularists can find much of great interest in French Cathedrals !!

Legless in Eden

Having seen countless frescos and reliefs of biblical stories during our recent visit to Italy I have become increasingly puzzled by their invariable depiction of the serpent in the mythological Temptation of Eve in the Garden of Eden. As in Gislebertus' relief above it never has legs. Now, I'm sure my schoolboy Christian indoctrination was that the god of the Bible removed the legs from the serpent (turning it and its descendants into snakes) as a punishment only **after** it had tempted Eve with the fruit or the tree of knowledge. Can anyone explain why medieval artists didn't know their Bible very well? Where are the legs? Harry

Nueva Esperanza (New Hope), a Village in El Salvador: Two Sec Soc Members' Experiences

In April Caroline Moles and I went to Nueva Esperanza. Two people from Birmingham, who talked to the Society some months ago, had fired our interest and sympathy for the support project there.

The village, on its present site, is seventeen years old and is located in the flood plain of the lower River Lempa. Originally the villagers lived further inland, but during the terrible civil war (1980–1992) the villagers were forced to flee to Nicaragua in order to avoid massacre by government troops or death squads.

They were guests of a co-operative in Nicaragua, and learned about the benefits of co-operative working and living. Some of the men and women became combatants. As one campesino (villager) put it to us: "The American Government was spending \$1 million a day to support the military – but they still couldn't beat us."

They determined that when they returned home they would run their village as a democratic co-operative and practise organic agriculture and gender equality. "The women had fought alongside us men in the battles – of course they should have equality", said a campesino.

They returned and found their village razed to the ground. They turned down an offer of more land that was infertile and had no water. They searched and found a disused cotton farm, the absentee landlord of which had gone to live in Miami. They settled in what was then a malaria-infested swamp with no services and harassed by army soldiers. With the help of the UN High Commission for Refugees they were able to last during the move and with some help from other organisations drain the land and start building. Drained, the land is good.

The food they produce for themselves is organic and as earth-friendly as possible in the way they produce it. Two huge fields are given over to sugar cane as a cash crop, and, since the refinery specifies that they have to use pesticides and herbicides, they have to compromise here. Otherwise they farm in common as well as having individual plots, and live in close companionship. The village takes decisions, meeting together on the basketball court; an elected committee takes minor

decisions. They have developed a school and are developing further education workshops, which currently include furniture making and music, and are planning to extend into other practical areas such as electronics and machine maintenance. They have a very strong girls' football team.

Most people in the village are Catholics. When I said to our campesino friend how this could be since the Spanish conquistadors came "with the sword in one hand, and the bible in the other", he agreed, and said something about their version of religion being different.

There was a march around the village commemorating the anniversary of the death of archbishop Romero. Romero came from the ruling class, but once he saw how most people lived in Salvador he became a champion of the working people. A death squad murdered him in his church for his class apostasy and he is seen as a symbol of the workers. They seem to practise a sort of liberation theology type of Catholicism here – the type of religion hated bitterly by the Vatican. A further force that binds them into religion is the support of their priest who has stayed with them for thirty years. When the authorities arrested him the whole village camped outside the prison banging saucepans together, and made such a noise that he was released.

Given the above it was only possible to observe their use of religion as a vehicle for raising social issues, such as the dumping of poisonous chemicals upstream by a factory, rather than challenging it. To do so, in workable but unsubtle Spanish, would have been grossly rude to these people, who have been through terrible murderous times, and who through principled co-operative working have achieved so much.

In fact the death squads seem not to be quite ended. The mayor of a village some twenty miles away who had helped to upgrade the lives of his village was killed by a death squad in January – apparently the local aristocracy were not too keen on his attempts to make the lives of ordinary people bearable.

All in all it has been an amazing experience to meet people who have been through nightmare experiences living their lives in gentle and world friendly ways.

Michael Gerard

Skeptics in the Pub

The Leicester group of *Skeptics in the Pub* is now meeting regularly in the Rutland and Derby on Millstone Lane on the third Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm.

After a fantastic start with Simon Singh last month, this month's (Tuesday 17th June) *Skeptics in the Pub* now announces the second event with another great speaker - **Nick Pullar on 'Skepticism and Beer: The World's Best Combination'**.

Nick Pullar ran *Skeptics in the Pub* in London for five years - and in all that time, he didn't drink a drop of beer, or consume any other alcoholic beverage - skeptical? Nick says skepticism is a useful tool to have in our own mental toolbox to help deal with difficult subjects.

Come along to see how skepticism can help understand UFOs, psychic healers and God. When speakers are not available a topic will be introduced for general discussion. Please email: leicesterskeptics@googlemail.com for more information.

Simon Perry

Leicester - City of Sanctuary

Congratulations to our member Helen Everett who was elected Chair of the recently founded group "Leicester City of Sanctuary" at its first AGM last month.

The group aims to promote a welcoming atmosphere for people coming to Leicester when fleeing danger spots around the world. Leicester is already respected world-wide as a haven where people of all backgrounds are welcomed with a warm hospitality. The City of Sanctuary campaign aims to enhance that perception. It has played a leading role in the food aid appeals for destitute asylum seekers recently featured in the newsletter.

Helen says she would welcome more input from Society members - and help with basic foodstuffs and other household supplies is still required.

Helen can be contacted at: helen.everett@newitt.freeserve.co.uk if you would like to help in any way. Please do.

Harry

Sharon Stone and the China Earthquakes

Seventy thousand dead is the count at the moment in the series of earthquakes and after tremors that have occurred in China. Thousands are missing and five million homeless. Aftershocks continue, adding to the misery and making the rescue missions more difficult and hazardous. Human beings, at least as we would recognize ourselves as such, have been around for over a hundred thousand years. Faced with such environmental disasters but no means of working out scientifically what was going on, the infancy of our species could be forgiven to conclude that great supernatural forces were at work, that maybe there was a cause and effect relationship between themselves and these seismic forces.

So it is in the environmental age somewhat disheartening to find that Sharon Stone thinks karma, particular because of Tibet, could be behind the earthquakes:

"I thought, is that karma – when you're not nice that the bad things happen to you?"

The BBC news site then tries to describe what karma means - the motivation behind an action has a consequence; rather than some kind of poetic justice. If you want to actually know about earthquakes information can be found at: <http://tiny.cc/Vr1cR>.

It seems there is a longing to find some cosmic rules of the game, where there is laid down a reason why everything happens. Religion claims to give a glimpse into these things. More people think astrology is correct than evolutionary theory. People want an explanation of things that seems tangible, controllable and relatively straightforward rather than a factual basis for what is going on. Reality is shunned

for supposedly deeper spiritual meaning; what cannot be fully understood is to be revered rather than scrutinized. Comfort is preferred to conclusions rooted in observations that may be closer to the truth, but not necessarily pleasant of themselves.

Perhaps we are still closer to our infancy than we would care to admit. As a Buddhist teacher comments:



"The earthquake in China or the cyclone in Burma have much to do with environmental factors," says Dhammadassina. "To invoke karma is more to do with our desire to nail things down and find someone to blame. But that's not ours to do."

It is more important to understand how these things happen, what can be done to reduce the impact of such earthquakes. There may be processes that we can examine, observe and make predictions about based on measurements and relationships - using the scientific method. Such understanding leads not only to knowledge but the ability for us to take action. That human beings in social cooperation can do much to eliminate the suffering that comes from natural disasters and man made ones.

I would hope *that* would have been Sharon Stone's message - which does not require Buddhism to have an insight into.

John Sargeant

This extract is from member John Sargeant's weblog at:

<http://homoeconomicusnet.wordpress.com/>

Newsletter News

Following last month's invitation I have received the following suggestions for newsletter names:

The Leicester Reasoner (Ned Newitt)

The Leicester Secularist (George Jelliss)

The Leicester Kafir (Simon Perry)

The Leicester Infidel (Simon Perry)

The Heathen (Simon Perry)

As the plan is to present a range of options to the Board for short-listing and then a membership vote, I feel that we have

barely scratched the surface as yet. Come on, what other ideas are out there? What about: *Radical Leicester*, *The Leicester Iconoclast* or *Secular Leicester*?

Whilst writing on newsletter matters, the Board has decided that a six pager is better than eight and so a number of regular features have been omitted this time and a couple of items have been held over till next. But please don't let that stop you sending items in - it's good to have a stock!

Please send your suggestions for names to me using the contact details on the back page. Thanks.

Harry

Yet another religious privilege

On a Friday evening recently I received a card through my letterbox giving notice of an open air Gospel Meeting to be held in the street nearby on the next day (outside Medway Primary School, Skipworth Street, LE2 from 12:00 to 14:00 on Saturday 10th May). It was to feature "Gospel Music, Dance, Drama, Testimonies and Stories". The organiser was named as Pastor Mukama Musinguzi, World Outreach Church, Leicester. Apparently this group normally meets at Days Inn, Abbey Street on Sundays (on the other side of the city centre). Fortunately it only proved to be a small group and apart from drums not too noisy or pushy.

I emailed the Licensing Department at Leicester City Council to ask if such a performance needs a licence, and if one was provided in this case. The reply I got was: "This event will not require a licence, as it is of a religious nature."

This then is another religious privilege, not available to the undeluded! Would we be able to obtain a licence to perform humanist songs outside, say, the Samworth Academy? What about outside Secular Hall on our open day? Perhaps we should test this.

George Jelliss

The full hijab

I do not understand what motivates Sam Turner in his "challenge to male members" (May News 2008) but I do know that I found it repulsive and I hope no one takes him up on it. In my experience, men who wear balaclavas with "just a slit for the eyes" are either rapists, paramilitaries or criminal thugs. Women who wear full hijab, as shown in your picture, are generally just going about their everyday business. By the way, if this is really only the third time that Sam has "encountered this phenomena" he must be living a very sheltered life. It is the *Leicester Secular Society* after all.

Jane Foxworthy

Is Slovenia Struggling for Secularism?

(The author of this article, Dejan Šinko, found our website while seeking information on studying in Leicestershire. He has offered this for publication to give our members some international insights into the activities of the RC Church and the challenges to secularists in countries dominated by it.)

To begin with, I would like to expose just two literary and historical facts. During the period of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century Slovene Lands first got books written in the Slovene language by the Lutheran preacher Primož Trubar. After this period there were two centuries of an almost perfect literary vacuum due to the Catholic Counter-Reformation, when all Protestant books apart from the Bible were burnt. For example, take the Slovene writer Ivan Cankar, filled with foreign decadent ideas so foreign to the Slovene "national" substance that only a hundred years ago in 1899 they had to be treated with fire. The bishop Jeglič bought the entire circulation of his volume of poetry *Erotika* and had it burnt. Historically, Roman Catholicism has had a culturally hegemonic position.

Not long ago, on 21 December 1991, Slovenia declared the separation of church and state. It also declared that all religious communities are equal in rights. But life is more complex than constitutional provisions can envisage. Of course, there are other religious groups in Slovenia as well, but their numbers are virtually negligible. Relations between the Catholic Church and the state have a privileged position and some parliamentary parties have Roman Catholic leanings and ties. There are a number of open issues between the Slovenian state and the Church. There is the issue of Church property (real estate). Slovenian legislation provides the return of nationalised and expropriated property to its own citizens and legal subjects. In principle, this goes for the Roman Catholic Church as well, where

ecclesiastic property (buildings) has been mostly returned. But vast areas of forests remain a matter of dispute. The problem is that some of the forests were not technically owned by the Church before World War II, but were state-owned and reserved for Church revenue (a relic of Josephian reforms). The Church unconditionally requests the return of all the forests in a direct form (not in bonds or other equities). There is no doubt that the Church is interested in the forests for economic purposes.

Secondly, the issue of religious instruction (and other educational forms) remains only partially resolved. The legislative act foresees that the subject be not of a confessional (denominational) nature, but does not specify whether the subject is to be taught from a theistic, religious point of view, an irreligious, or a neutral one (if the last is possible). It also does not stipulate as to who the qualified teachers will be. The Catholic Church has opened two



Academic Secondary Schools, which are mostly financed through public funds. The Roman Catholic Faculty of Theology in Ljubljana has been reinstated under the University of Ljubljana, retaining its autonomy as to doctrinal matters and its line of authority leading to the Vatican.

Rather than a gradual erosion of religious privilege I think that we move backwards, in a religious direction. It seems the position of secular citizens is hopeless. But some of us are trying to challenge the trend - we keep company with each other, write articles on web-forums and now we are trying to awaken hidden atheists with penetrating articles published in one of the most important Slovene newspapers, *Delo*.

Dejan Šinko

Anti-Trident Campaign

On 28th April 2008 Emma Bateman, David Ray and Zina Zelter, all from Leicester, and seven others blockaded the gates of the Rolls Royce factory at Ranesway, Derby, where fuel rods for the nuclear power plants of the £70 billion Trident weapons system are manufactured and tested at the nuclear reactor there.

Two blocks of concrete with tubes embedded were dropped in the road leading to the factory and seven people attached themselves to the blocks with karabiners linked to rods at the bottom of the tubes so they could release themselves, but would have to be cut from the concrete if the authorities were to remove them without injury. Two other people attached themselves with locks and chains to a secondary gate nearby, effectively blocking all entry to the factory for five-and-a-half hours. It took a specially trained police unit to cut them free.

When press and media at the scene tried to speak to the protestors they were unable to do so directly because to cross a red line drawn by the authorities is to break the law.

A priest, acting as spokesman for the protestors, explained that the blockade was being carried out in order to bring to public attention that critical parts of the Trident weapons system were being manufactured at the site in direct contravention of the Nuclear Weapons Non-proliferation Treaty.

In a press statement he pointed out that "Under the 1950 Nuremberg principles, companies and their employees are directly accountable for any part they play in committing war crimes and crimes against humanity. After the 'Holocaust', businessmen were found guilty of war crimes and executed for the manufacture and supply of the poison gas used in the concentration camps, even though it was their own government that used it. Similarly the managers at Rolls Royce Raynesway may one day be held personally responsible for their contribution towards Trident."

The protestors were arrested under the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 presented by the media as being created to deal with international fraud, drugs and people trafficking, and the creation of a special police unit to combat the activities of major crime rings.

Slipped quietly into the Act was provision to control protests near Parliament and sites designated by the Secretary of State. This law is being used to curtail the activities of people challenging the legality of the acts of the very government creating the new law. Our right to protest applies only where and when the Secretary of State allows it.

On Radio Four recently I heard someone say we are living in an elected dictatorship. I leave readers to draw conclusions. The protestors have been charged with "aggravated trespass". A trial date has been set for October. Watch this space.

Dave Ray

LSS Contact Details

President - Allan Hayes

Email: allan-hayes@ntlworld.com

Tel: 0116 241 8747

Chairperson - Michael Gerard

Email: michaelfrancisgerard@hotmail.com

Tel: 0116 210 9027

Treasurer/Web group admin - John Catt

Email: treasurer@leicestersecularsociety.org.uk

Tel: 01509 211468

Secretary/Newsletter editor - Harry Perry

Email: harry.perry1@btinternet.com

Tel: 07795 097635

Events co-ordinator - Mike Burden

Email: mikeburden2001@yahoo.co.uk

Tel: 07722 782727

Hall bookings - Wilf Gaunt

Email: wilfredgaunt@yahoo.com

Tel: 07857 658576

Website - Frank Friedman

Email: web@leicestersecularsociety.org.uk

Tel: 0116 292 1964

Keyholders: Allan, Michael G, Harry and Wilf are all keyholders for the Hall.

Audio-visual kit: This is normally held by Michael G or Harry

All can be reached by post via the Hall address.

Review of the IDEAS group meeting on 29th May

"Should scientific investigations and applications be controlled and, if so, how?"

A few members attended the discussion opened by Peter Thompson. (It was a very rainy night. I hope that was the reason! PT.)

There was general agreement that *applications* have to be controlled since they directly affect people. Everything is not black and white. Beneficial applications can have unwelcome aspects, e.g. nuclear energy, Genetically Modified Organisms, IVF treatment.

On the other hand, scientific investigation, research and thought have to be as free-ranging as possible. Even here, though, Allan posed the question - "If a chemist were thinking of, and sketching out the necessary experimentation for, a toxin so powerful that a single gram would destroy humankind do we not think that he should be stopped?" Especially as history seems to show that if something is possible then it will be done.

As to how control should be exerted it was pointed out that a vast amount of current research is directly under the control of the military and multi-nationals using the power of funding money. How to make it more democratic? There is comparatively little basic research now being done in the UK. Paradoxically much more is being done in the USA because they have a large number of well-endowed universities who can fund research independently of the military/industrial complex.

Openness is the key. Peer review already exists with publication of results in scientific journals. This should be extended to a legal requirement to publish *all* results whether they are what the sponsor wants or not. This should also apply to proposals for research with indications of possible outcomes.

Peter Thompson

The Barnum effect

Although very interesting, the Barnum effect (May News 2008) isn't used by psychics nearly as much as people might think. There are a huge number of techniques available to charlatans. We've all heard about people visiting mediums and being told extremely specific things that they never could have guessed. The way they manage these amazing feats is simply by getting the punter to reveal the information openly, but then change the way the person remembers it so that when they leave they are convinced that the medium told them rather than vice versa. It's a fascinating topic - Ian Rowland's "Full Facts Book of Cold Reading" is a great book for anyone interested in learning about these sorts of techniques.

Simon Perry

Contributions welcomed

Don't forget the Editor is always on the lookout for YOUR contribution for YOUR newsletter. Either email it to: harry.perry1@btinternet.com or post to the Hall FAO Harry Perry. Anything secular or of concern to you can be sent in, especially if it has a local connection. If you have an image to go with it so much the better. News, jokes, poems, letters, cartoons, announcements, event reviews, etc., etc, but **please keep articles to under 500 words, letters to under 350 words and event reports to under 250 words.** Thanks!

Members' Google Group

The Google internet discussion group is open to all members (with internet access) and provides a good place to share your views - **especially** if you are unable to attend meetings or just not ready to get up and voice them. It is easy to join too - just email John Catt at: treasurer@leicestersecularsociety.org.uk and he will fix you up.

Disclaimer and Code of Conduct

Please note that the views and proposals expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Board of the Society and the Society and its officers accept no liability for views expressed. As a Freethought organisation any member's views will be published subject to the usual constraints of avoiding libel and occasional editing to fit the space available. When writing please abstain from intemperate language and avoid being unnecessarily offensive, especially to other members! Thank you.

email: mail@leicestersecularsociety.org.uk

www.leicestersecularsociety.org.uk