



The National Federation of Atheist, Humanist and
Secular Student Societies

*A Guide to Charity
and Volunteering*

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Contents

Introduction	4
Some success stories.....	5
Feedback	5
Things to consider	6
Who will be involved?.....	6
Individual fundraisers.....	6
Joint events with other societies	6
Types of event.....	6
Choosing a Charity	7
Suggestions	8
A-Z of group ideas	17
Auction.....	17
Bag packing.....	17
Cake stalls.....	17
Donut sales.....	17
Egging.....	18
Fashion Show	18
Gig night.....	18
Hot chilli contest	18
International celebration	19
Jewellery sale	19
Karaoke	19
Ladies' day/evening	19

Murder Mystery Night	19
Nicola	20
Outing.....	20
Pancake Party.....	20
Quiz night	21
Raffle	21
Shaking Buckets	21
Tea party	21
University Challenge	22
Vegetarian Week.....	22
Washing cars	22
Xylophone concert.....	22
Yellow day	23
Zoo trip.....	23
Sponsored Event Ideas.....	23
Collecting the money	23
JustGiving	24
Non-Prophet Week	24

Introduction

Voluntary work and charity are central to the Humanist world view. Humanists seek to make the best of the one life we have by creating meaning and purpose for ourselves, individually and together. This provides secular motivation for voluntary and charitable activities.

Charitable events are fun, rewarding and inclusive. This guide has been produced to help your society do charity work, with the hope that AHS members will be inspired to become more active in this area.

Do not worry if you have not run such events in the past or if your society is small. This guide will help you pick an event or activity that is suitable for you and your society.

The AHS wishes you success in arranging any charitable events. Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any problems or if there is any way we can help.

Make sure you do not miss out on Non-Prophet Week, the AHS's Godless Giving week running for a second time from 7th to 13th November 2011. See www.ahsstudents.org.uk/non-prophetweek or the end of this guide.



AHS Godless Giving

SOME SUCCESS STORIES

Bradford Atheist and Humanist Society ran a cake stall as their first ever event and raised over £100 for Marie Curie Cancer Care.



University of Edinburgh Humanist Society runs regular blood drives.

Leeds Atheist Society runs an annual Quiz Night and raffle. They have in the past raised money for Unicef, Amnesty International and Water Aid.

Members are also involved with the Leeds-based Humanist Action Group (HAGs). HAGs feed the homeless, paint over graffiti and for Christmas2010 made and donated over 30 food packages to give to the homeless shelters of Leeds.

FEEDBACK

The AHS would be extremely interested to hear any feedback of events you have run to improve future versions of this guide – don't hesitate to email secretary@ahsstudents.org.uk.

Things to consider

WHO WILL BE INVOLVED?

You could run an individual fundraiser, do it in a small group, do it with your whole society or even do it jointly with other societies.

Individual fundraisers

Individual fundraisers take a lot of initiative and drive. You can either run an event or get sponsored to do something.

Joint events with other societies

Running an event jointly with other societies gets more people involved and will therefore hopefully raise more money. Suggested societies you might want to run charity fundraisers with include local Humanist groups, faith societies, the Amnesty International Society, the Stop Aids Society and RAG (Raise and Give).

TYPES OF EVENT

Your society needs to decide if you want to raise money to give to a charity or perform voluntary activities.

Raising money to give to a charity is a nice and simple way to help, and charities greatly appreciate any funds they get. Suggested charities and event ideas appear later in the guide.

Doing voluntary work requires dedicated volunteers. You could for instance feed the homeless, paint over graffiti, pick up litter, run a blood drive or arrange an event for deprived children or old people.



You could do a food drive, whereby you stand outside a supermarket or shop and encourage people to buy one extra item, which you will pass onto a homeless shelter. You can also collect money and buy extra items yourself.

You could do a mixture of activities, such as raising money to buy food and then giving it to a homeless shelter or buying blankets and warm clothes and give them out on the street.

Choosing a Charity

Picking a charity can seem like a daunting task. The most important thing is to pick one that most people will support. We recommend you choose a charity that does not have a political or religious agenda. There may be a local group or student society that is in desperate need of money or support, so it is well worth doing some research.

SUGGESTIONS

Here are some suggestions of secular and Humanist charities, with thanks to the [British Humanist Association](#).

[Age UK](#)



[Donate now](#)

In ROI? Try [Age Action Ireland](#) –
[Donate now](#)

Age UK has recently formed following the merger of Age Concern and Help the Aged. They believe that those of old age need respect, kindness and sometimes help. Age UK has a vision of a world in which older people flourish. They aim to improve later life for everyone through information and advice, campaigns, products, training and research.

Alzheimer's Society

[Alzheimer's Society](#)

[Donate now](#)

In Scotland? Try [Alzheimer Scotland](#) –
[Donate now](#). In ROI? Try the [Alzheimer Society of Ireland](#) – [Donate now](#)

Alzheimer's affects around 465,000 people in the UK. Alzheimer's Society support people locally, provide a reliable telephone service and online information and invest money in research to find possible cures. They help train people who care for those with dementia and campaign on various issues to raise awareness.

[Amnesty International](#)



amnesty.org.uk

Amnesty International campaign around the world for universal human rights. This is anything from a person's right to safe drinking water to a rape victim's right to an abortion. They support the victims of political problems and their families. They are against the death penalty and stand up for people's religious and political

[Donate now](#)

freedoms.

In ROI? Try [AI Ireland](#) – [Donate now](#)

[East African Playgrounds](#)



East African Playgrounds (EAP) is a UK-based charity that sends out teams of volunteers from the UK and builds playgrounds for schools, orphanages, charities and other organisations in East Africa. In realising this aim, EAP intends to: provide an important space for children to be children and escape the stresses of life; support local people and use locally-sourced materials; enhance relationships between peoples and countries and develop our volunteers' cultural understanding.

[Donate Now](#)

[Education for Choice](#)



Education for Choice support a woman's right to choose if she has an abortion. They campaign and educate on these issues. They call for young people to have the facts on abortion, whoever they are, whoever they ask, wherever they go.

[Donate now](#)

In ROI? Try [Choice Ireland](#)

[Kiva \(Humanist Lending Team\)](#)

Kiva's mission is to connect people, through lending, for the sake of alleviating poverty. Kiva empowers individuals to lend to an entrepreneur across the globe. By combining microfinance with the internet, Kiva is creating a global community of people connected through lending. As of November 2009, Kiva has facilitated over \$100 million in loans.



Your society could lend money. When you get it back, relend to help more people around the world.

[Lend now](#)

[Marie Curie](#)



[Donate now](#)

In ROI? Try [the Irish Cancer Society](#) – [Donate now](#)

Marie Curie provides care for cancer patients and their families. They are carrying out the research and innovation necessary to find out what the best possible care is and how best to provide it. They are determined that the needs of the dying remain on the political agenda and will continue to campaign for patients to be able to die in their own homes in all four countries of the UK. Their core values are putting patients and families first.

[Médecins Sans Frontières](#)



[Donate now](#)

In ROI? Try [MSF Ireland](#) – [Donate now](#)

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an independent humanitarian medical aid organisation. They are committed to providing medical aid where it is most needed, regardless of race, religion, politics or gender. They also aim to raise awareness of the plight of the people they help.

[National Aids Trust](#)



National Aids Trust (NAT) is the UK's leading charity dedicated to transforming society's response to HIV. They provide fresh thinking, expert advice and practical resources, and campaign for change.

[Donate now](#)

[National Blood Service](#)



See also [Scotland](#), [Wales](#), [Northern Ireland](#) and the [Republic of Ireland](#)

Blood drives have been popular with AHS Societies. Just set a date to visit a blood donation centre (if one is near). Remember to book. If any of your members have not given blood before [check they are allowed to](#). While most European countries are fine, it is better to check are eligible in advance. If there is anything they are unsure of ask them to ring the hotline, **0300 123 23 23**.

[One Laptop per Child](#)



[Donate now](#)

One Laptop per Child's aim is to create educational opportunities for the world's poorest children by providing each child with a rugged, low-cost, low-power, connected laptop with content and software designed for collaborative, joyful, self-empowered learning. When children have access to this type of tool they get engaged in their own education. They learn, share, create, and collaborate. They become connected to each other, to the world and to a brighter future.

[One World Action](#)

One World Action works with local partners in developing countries to ensure marginalised people have a voice. Women's rights are central to all they do. They believe just and sustainable development is not possible if half the

world is excluded.



[Donate now](#)

[Oxfam UK](#)



[Donate now](#)

In ROI? Try [Oxfam Ireland](#) – [Donate now](#)

Oxfam is a vibrant global movement of passionate, dedicated people fighting poverty and doing amazing work together. People power drives everything they do, from saving lives and developing projects that put poor people in charge of their lives and livelihoods, to campaigning for change that lasts.

[Plan UK](#)



[Donate now](#)

In ROI? Try [Plan Ireland](#) – [Donate now](#)

Plan is one of the largest child-centred community development organisations in the world, helping children and their families in 48 of the poorest countries to break the cycle of poverty.

[Shelter](#)

Shelter help homeless people find homes and support people at risk of being homeless. Housing is the key factor determining a person's health, wellbeing, and prospects in life. 1.8

Shelter

Donate now ([England](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#))

In ROI? Try [Simon](#) – [Donate now](#)

million households in England languish on council waiting lists, and the numbers stuck in temporary accommodation have soared. Shelter has achieved great things in its history, but work will not stop until everyone in Britain can access a decent, affordable home.

[Sightsavers](#)



[Donate now](#)

Sightsavers are an international charity which works with partners to eliminate avoidable blindness and promote equality of opportunity for disabled people in the developing world. They work to both cure people who have reversible eye conditions and prevent people from becoming needlessly blind. They help people who are blind to live a more independent life.

[Sparks](#)



[Donate now](#)

Sparks' vision is a world where all babies are given the best possible start in life and where a medical condition or disability at birth is not a barrier to opportunity and fulfilment.

Their aim is to achieve this by funding high quality medical research that is intended to have a practical and positive effect on the lives of children.

[UNICEF](#)



[Donate now](#)

In ROI? Try [UNICEF Ireland](#) –

UNICEF is the world's leading organisation protecting the rights of children and young people. Around the world, children's rights are being denied on a daily basis, including in emergencies such as natural disasters and conflict.

UNICEF is working in over 190 countries to protect children's rights to be educated, to be healthy, to a childhood, to be treated fairly and to be heard. They work with local communities, partners and governments to ensure these rights are upheld.

[Donate now](#)

[Uganda Humanist Schools Trust](#)



The Uganda Humanist Schools Trust was established in November 2008 as a charity to raise funds to support the efforts of Ugandan Humanists, who have founded three schools which offer students a secular humanist education.

[Donate now](#)

[WaterAid](#)



WaterAid is an international non-governmental organisation. Their mission is to transform lives by improving access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation in the world's poorest communities.

[Donate now](#)

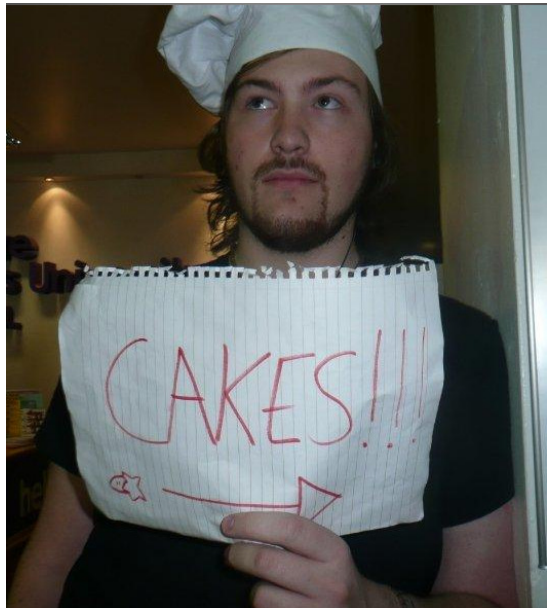
A-Z of group ideas

Auction

Get donations from members, friends and local business. They can be physical things such as a bottle of wine to someone donating an hour's singing lesson or to be their slave for a few hours. Try to get as many unique prizes as possible. Your Student Union could possibly donate some prizes.

Bag packing

Pack bags at your local supermarket and ask for donations. Contact your supermarket specifying the day you would like to bag pack and the cause you are raising for. You will need a collecting bucket or tin per person. It is good if you all have matching t-shirts. You might like to have leaflets about the charity with you to give out to anyone interested.



Cake stalls

Book a stall, get members of your society to bake cakes, biscuits and buns, and then set up the stall on campus. Just make sure that one of you has a food hygiene certificate. You will also need a money tin and float.

Donut sales

Krispy Kreme doughnuts taste really nice and they do great offers for fundraisers. People are always selling them on Leeds University Campus. Book a stall, beg members to help out and raise some cash. You will also need a money tin and float.

Egging

Go around your local town, city or student area, knock on doors and ask, 'How much would you donate, if I allowed you to smash this egg on my head?' It is amazing how much money you can make. You can do this on campus too. You may get eggs smashed on your head though.

Fashion Show

If you have arty people in your society ask them to design different outfits, get a venue, beg people to be models and sell tickets. This kind of event needs lots of good publicity to be successful.

Gig night

Book a venue, your union or local pubs might give you it for free as long as a certain amount is spent at the bar. Ask local bands or friends bands to play. Most will do it for free, because they want an audience to hear their music. You could offer to give them free drinks. Sell tickets to make money. To increase sales one option is to tell the bands they get a cut of each ticket they sell. You could make the event a battle of the bands and have a prize for the winner.

Hot chilli contest

See who can eat the most hot chillies before giving up. Very funny. Charge to enter and/or to watch. Let people bet on who they think will win. Have a good selection of hot chillies!

International celebration

Celebrate one of the many holidays from around the world and either collect for the event, run a raffle or pass a hat around during the event.



Jewellery sale

Host a '[MySmallShop Fair Trade Party](#)' and sell pretty fairly-traded jewellery, scarves, and lovely bits and pieces. 20% of all your sales go to the charity.

Karaoke

Rent/borrow a Karaoke machine or use someone's computer. Either get people to pay to sing, pay to attend or make general donations. Works well with a raffle.

Ladies' day/evening

Organise an evening of pampering. It is polite to invite men, if you do not mind them being there. Ideas include pedicures, manicures, facemasks, foot spas, hair dyeing and styling.

Murder Mystery Night

Invite your society and friends around for a night of murder mystery. Ask people to donate £10 for the privilege of attending such a fun event. This

could be done in conjunction with a raffle or cake sale. There are various games you can buy, for example from [here](#).



Nicola

Contact the AHS (Nicola Jackson secretary 2010-11) who would love to help you with ideas and running your events. secretary@ahsstudents.org.uk.

Outing

Arrange an outing or picnic and charge. You could go to a museum, walk, hike, etc.

Pancake Party

Invite your society and friends to someone's house to eat pancakes. Ask for a donation to attend and enjoy eating and making pancakes.

Top Tip: Pancake recipe

Ratios:

1 egg

Half a mug of flour

Half a mug of milk/water

Instructions: Whisk the egg(s), sieve in the flour, put the water/milk in, and mix. Put oil in a pan and heat (whatever is the max setting), then when the pan is very hot, pour the mixture in. When the mixture has set on top flip the pancake! Wait a few minutes and then your yummy pancake is ready.

Remember you'll need fillings such as sugar, oranges, lemons, syrup, melted chocolate/Nutella, peanut butter, strawberries etc.

Quiz night

Turn a society event into a quiz night. This can be in a pub or a meeting room. You can either charge to be part of the game or as Leeds Atheist Society regularly does, run it in conjunction with a raffle. You just need questions, paper, pens and a quiz master. Then pass a hat around to collect people's change and sell raffle tickets. This normally collects £60-£100.

Raffle

Write/email local companies in your area asking for prizes. Make sure you tell them what a good cause the money raised will be going to. Good places to try are hairdressers/beauty therapy places, clubs, gig venues, comedy clubs, sports venues, restaurants, milkshake places and comic book shops. Small locally run businesses are more likely to reap rewards than national ones. Student Unions often give out tickets to events, if you ask nicely and tell them about your event.

Ask members to donate prizes. Suggestions include wine, cakes and chocolate.

Shaking Buckets

It is actually now illegal to shake buckets, but you can hold a bucket and encourage people to donate change in other ways. This is a great easy way to raise money. Wonder around your union bars, stand outside night clubs, sporting events, supermarkets, basically anywhere there are lots of people. It is fun to do it in fancy dress. Note it is important to ask permission first.

Tea party

Invite your society and friends around to drink tea. This could be combined with selling cakes and raffle tickets. It is one of the more relaxed ways of raising money, depending on how many people turn up of course.

University Challenge

This is different to a quiz night as the focus is on a few brainiacs rather than everyone being in teams. Get groups to pay to enter the contest or to watch the competition. You will need a quiz master, some hard questions, a venue and a good prize for the winners.

Vegetarian Week

Convince members of your society to not eat meat for a week and get sponsored for it. You can combine this with a vegetarian themed night or ask people to bring vegetarian snacks to that week's social or event.

Washing cars

Get some buckets, sponges and cleaning liquid and get washing cars! Obviously it is nicer to do this in warmer weather.

Xylophone concert

Host a xylophone concert and get all your xylophone fanatic friends to come.

Yellow day

All wear sunshine yellow for a day. Face and body paint too if you dare! It will brighten up the day for your friends and raise lots of money too. Just make sure it is obvious you have painted your skin and you do not have jaundice.

Zoo trip

All go to the zoo to admire God's crazy creations. Cash in on any group discounts/student discounts the zoo might give.

Sponsored Event Ideas

Sponsored events are the most popular individual method of fundraising. You and other members of your society can do pretty much anything and ask friends and family to pay you. Try to make it as visual, original or as shocking as possible.

Here are some ideas to get you started: body wax, bungee jump, fast, gunge, head shave/hair cut/hair dye, 12 hour tennis match, hike, jail break, litter pick marathon, run, silence, skydive, swim...

For some events it might be good to ask to be sponsored on how much, how far or how long. For instance, saying you will not speak for an hour for every £20 raised, or asking to be sponsored per mile you travel on a jail break.

COLLECTING THE MONEY

You can collect sponsor money in two ways: using a JustGiving page (see below), or having an old-fashioned sponsor form and collecting the money (you could then put any money collected on your JustGiving page).

JUSTGIVING

Many charities listed in this guide are on the JustGiving site, [here](#). JustGiving takes a small cut of any funds raised, but the advantage to Just Giving is that you can claim Gift Aid and do not have to mess about with physical money (though you can supplement online donations with offline ones).

It is extremely easy to create a page on JustGiving. You are allowed to add pictures and write about the cause, and about what you are doing. You get a link, which you can share with friends, family and society members. JustGiving boast that it takes less than 20 seconds to donate money on a friend's page.

Non-Prophet Week



7th - 13th November 2011

www.ahstudents.org.uk/nonprophetweek

The AHS is excited to announce our second charity week, Non-Prophet Week! We hope to raise much-needed cash to help a variety of charities continue the incredible work they do. Non-Prophet Week is running from 7th-13th November 2011 and we are hoping to beat the £2,500 raised last year – the target to beat is almost £700 as set by Aston Humanist. We are focusing our efforts this year on raising money for the secular organisation, Children in Need, there's also the added incentive of TV coverage for you (if you needed anymore!) Our Irish members should dedicate money raised to Bernardo's.

During Non-Prophet Week, AHS societies are encouraged to raise and give money for charity. (Not that we do not love you to help charities any time of the year!) You choose the charity, you raise the money, you give the money to the charity, you have the fun, you compete with other societies to see who can raise the most, and boast about your results to the wider world.

The Non-Prophet Week website aims to help you pick events or activities that are suitable for you and your society. You can monitor the progress of other societies in the build-up to and during the week itself, and there will be prizes for societies that raise the most during the week, and are the most inventive.

We would like you to take as many good photos as possible. Let's show that the irreligious are just as charitable as the religious.

Last year some of our members were inspired to do all sorts of things to raise money:

- Cork ran 'Stone a Heathen'
- Presidents of Southampton and Ashton went for a run
- Durham ran a film night
- The president of UB:ASH became a vegan for a week
- Bradford planted trees

There has already been talk of a cake delivery bike ride this year, can you think up anything more exciting!

In order to participate in Non-Prophet Week you must be an AHS member or a local Humanist group.

The money raised must go to a charity which does not promote atheist, Humanist or secularist values in the UK or Republic of Ireland. If you are unsure if a charity counts, please ask us.

You must provide evidence of donating the money. This could be in the form of a photograph of a cheque, a print screen of the donation or a JustGiving page.



Leeds Atheist Society raising money for Darwin Day.

Good luck and have fun!

Written by Nicola Young Jackson

with contributions from Richy Thompson and Damian Rumble

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