

**THE MANCHESTER AND LANCASHIRE
FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
CONSTITUTION**



1. NAME

The name of the Society shall be The Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society hereinafter called the Society.

2. AIMS

a) The Aims of the Society shall be:-

- i) To promote and encourage the public study of British family history, genealogy, heraldry and local history.
- ii) To promote the preservation, security and accessibility of archival material.

b) In the furtherance of the above aims, but not further or otherwise, the Society shall have the following powers:-

- i) To promote and engage in educational activities including the issue of a regular Journal and the publication and sale of other appropriate material;
- ii) To hold lectures and discussions and organise research visits for members and interested members of the general public;
- iii) The option to hold and maintain a library of printed and other works for the use of members and others;
- iv) To preserve and transcribe or publish original source materials including documents and monumental inscriptions;
- v) To collaborate with similar established supportive bodies such as churches, libraries, record offices and educational establishments;
- vi) To support where appropriate the activities of the Federation of Family History Societies in its pursuit of these and similar aims.

c) The Executive Committee, set up as in clause 5a, shall have the power to establish Branches for the furtherance of the Society's aims. Each Branch so established shall comply with and be subject to the following regulations:-

- i) Any Branch so established shall act in pursuance with the said aims and policy of the Society and shall be subject to such conditions as shall from time to time be laid down by the Society's Executive Committee.
- ii) The Branches shall be deemed to have adopted the rules for Branches as prescribed from time to time by the Society's Executive Committee unless it has, with the prior consent of the said Executive Committee, adopted other rules.
- iii) Representation of Branches on the Society's Executive Committee shall be as determined in clause 5a(iii) below.
- iv) The Society may provide funds to a Branch appropriate to its size and activities connected with its regular meetings and running expenses. No Branch may levy its own Branch membership subscription.
- v) A Branch may, with the prior agreement of the Executive Committee, open a bank account which shall be run in accordance with the Policy laid down by the Society. Any monies in the Branch bank account which remain from the above funds after the above expenses have been met shall remain at all times the monies of the Society. The Branch shall keep accounts in such a form as shall be laid down by the Society's Executive Committee and shall be subject to annual audit or independent examination.

vi) All material, either printed or stored on microform or electronically, and any other assets purchased by the Branch shall be assets of the Society. In the event of disbandment of a Branch, where any assets of the Branch are currently held for inspection by their members at a location other than the Society Headquarters, then the Society's Executive Committee will endeavour to administer such assets in their current location pending any possible re-establishment of the Branch.

vii) A Branch may be suspended at any time by the Executive Committee and closed by a vote at an Extraordinary General Meeting called by a resolution of the Executive Committee of the Society. Upon suspension the monies and assets of the Branch shall be treated in accordance with the provisions laid out above.

3. AFFILIATION

The Society shall have the option of becoming a member of The Federation of Family History Societies and shall have the power to affiliate with other charitable organisations whose aims are deemed compatible and mutually supportive. If any of these organisations shall be or become a Company Limited by Guarantee the Society's Executive Committee may guarantee such an amount or amounts as required providing that such an amount does not exceed £1 for any such company.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- a) Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons showing a genuine interest in support of the Society's aims.
- b) Classes of membership and voting rights shall be determined by the Executive Committee of the Society. Classes include such categories as Single, Family, Overseas and such other categories as Executive Committee may consider appropriate.
- c) Subscriptions appropriate to each class of membership shall be payable at the time and rate determined by the Executive Committee of the Society.
- d) The Executive Committee may, subject to a unanimous vote of the members present, refuse an application for membership, refuse an application to renew membership or suspend from membership any person whose activities or behaviour, in its opinion, are prejudicial to the Society or in contravention of the Society's Code of Conduct. Suspended Members shall have the right to present their case directly to the Executive Committee in writing or in person, accompanied by a friend, and shall have the right of final appeal at an Extraordinary General Meeting convened by the Executive Committee in accordance with the procedure outlined in clause 6b below.

5. ADMINISTRATION

- a) The Officers of the Society, who shall be fully paid up members of the Society, shall be the Chairman, the Vice-chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer

The Society shall be administered by an Executive Committee with the following membership:-

- i) The Officers
 - ii) *A maximum of 9 other* Members of the Executive Committee who shall be fully paid up members of the Society.
 - iii) One member of the committee of each Branch set up under the provisions in clause 2c above, chosen by the Branch committee to serve as a Branch Representative to represent the interests of the Branch on the Executive Committee.
- b) There shall be a quorum when at least one third of the Members of the Executive Committee for the time being or three Members of the Executive Committee, whichever is the greater, are present at a meeting. One of those present shall be an officer who will chair the meeting.
 - c) The Officers of the Executive Committee shall be elected annually by those members present at the Annual General Meeting and their terms of office shall commence at the conclusion of the meeting.
 - d) The Members of the Executive Committee shall be elected for a three-year term of office by those members present at the Annual General Meeting and their terms of office shall commence at the conclusion of the meeting.

e) Nominations for Officers and Members of the Executive Committee should be submitted in writing not less than 28 days before the first day of the month in which the Annual General Meeting is to take place. If insufficient nominations have been received to fill the vacancies, the Presiding Chairman of the meeting may at his/her discretion, take nominations from the floor.

f) Officers and Members of the Executive Committee shall, on completion of their terms of office, be eligible for re-election subject to the following conditions:

i) No Officer of the Executive Committee shall serve more than seven consecutive years in one capacity with the exception of the Treasurer whose eligibility for re-election may be extended at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Previous service as an Officer in an acting capacity shall not be counted towards service for the purpose of this requirement.

ii) Members of the Executive Committee and Branch Representatives may serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms. Previous service on the Executive Committee as a co-opted member as described in clause 5g below shall not be counted towards service for the purposes of this requirement.

iii) If a Member of the Executive Committee or Branch Representative is subsequently elected as an Officer of the Executive Committee, his/her previous service as a Member shall not be counted as a part of the seven-year term described in (i) above.

iv) An Officer, Member of the Executive Committee or Branch Representative who has stood down under the terms of (i) or (ii) above will not be eligible for re-election or to be co-opted as described in 5g below until at least one year following his/her standing down.

g) The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt a paid up Society member to serve as a Member of the Executive Committee to fill a casual vacancy or for any other purpose, but the selected individual shall be subject to any restriction specified in clause 5f above. No one may be co-opted as a Member of the Executive Committee if, as a result, more than one third of the Members of the Executive Committee would be co-opted Members. A Member of the Executive Committee co-opted shall remain in this position only until the next Annual General Meeting.

h) The Executive Committee shall have the power to nominate such person as it shall think fit to be President and up to ten persons to be Vice-presidents. Such persons who consent to their nomination shall be recommended by the Executive Committee to Society members for election at a General Meeting. The position of President shall be honorary and shall be held for a term of three years and, after re election, one further period of three years subject to earlier termination by mutual agreement. The position of a Vice-president shall be honorary and shall be held for a maximum of 10 years, subject to termination by mutual agreement. The President and Vice-presidents shall not be eligible to stand as Officers or Members of Executive Committee.

i) The Society may create an unlimited number of Fellowships. Nominations for Fellowship may be made by the Society's Executive Committee and awards will be subject to confirmation by a vote at the next Annual General Meeting following nomination. Fellowships may be bestowed upon any member of the Society who, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, has made a substantial contribution to the advancement of the Society and its aims. Fellows shall be entitled to receive such benefits as the Executive Committee shall from time to time determine.

J) Trustees are persons having the general control, responsibility and management of the administration of the Society. The Officers and all Members of the Executive Committee are the Trustees of the Society.

6. GENERAL MEETINGS

a) An Annual General Meeting will be held, when officers shall present their reports. Notification of this meeting will be given to members at least 28 days prior to the event.

b) An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened at the request of the Executive Committee or at the request of 20 or more paid up members of the Society or at the request of a member subject to suspension as described in clause 4d above. Written notice of the meeting, setting out the business to be discussed, shall be sent to members at least 28 days prior to the meeting.

c) A quorum at any General Meeting shall consist of not less than 30 paid up members.

- d) Only paid up members of the Society present at General Meetings shall be entitled to vote. Proxy or postal votes shall not be acceptable.
- e) Each member of the Society shall be entitled to a single vote. Family memberships shall only be entitled to a single vote
- f) Voting for the election of Officers and Members of the Executive Committee at Annual General Meetings shall be by a show of hands, or at the discretion of the Presiding Chairman, by secret ballot. In the event of equality of votes, the election shall be decided by drawing lots.
- g) Voting on resolutions at General Meetings shall be by show of hands, or at the discretion of the Presiding Chairman voting may be conducted by secret ballot. If there is no majority, the Presiding Chairman of the meeting shall have the casting vote. Decisions shall be by simple majority except in the case of amendments to the constitution set out in clause 7 or dissolution as set out in clause 9 below.
- h) One or more Auditors or Independent Examiners shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting to carry out the duties referred to in clause 8c below.

7. CONSTITUTION

This Constitution can only be amended or altered at an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting for which proper notice has been given and then only if the proposed alteration or amendment receives at least two thirds of the votes of those members present and eligible to vote at the meeting under clause 4b. No such alteration or amendment shall cause the Society to cease to be a Charity at law. In particular, no alteration may be made to clause 2a (i) and (ii) which define the aims of the Society or to clause 9 which relates to dissolution of the Society without the approval of the Charity Commissioners. Proposals for amendments to this Constitution must be submitted to the Executive Committee at least 56 days prior to the first day of the month in which the Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting is to be held.

8. FINANCE

- a) All income and property of the Society shall be applied solely towards the promotion and execution of the aims of the Society as defined in clause 2 above. No portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly to any Member of the Executive Committee. Nothing herein, however, shall prevent the reimbursement of reasonable and proper out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Society.
- b) The Society shall cause proper books and accounts to be kept with respect to all sums of money received and expended by the Society and the matters in respect of which those receipts and expenditures take place.
- c) The Society's accounts shall be prepared annually and shall be subject to Audit or Independent Examination. A copy of the accounts, appropriately certified, shall be presented to all paid-up members of the Society. A copy shall also be sent to the Charity Commissioners in compliance with charity legislation.

9. DISSOLUTION

The Society may be dissolved by a resolution passed by not less than three quarters of members with voting rights present at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for the purpose and for which 28 days notice has been given in writing. Such a resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets or monies held by the Society after all debts and liabilities have been met, the balance left being transferred to some other charitable institution having the same or similar aims to those of the Society.