

East Surrey Family History Society

Registered Charity No. 286659

CONSTITUTION

1. NAME AND ADDRESS

The name of the Society shall be **EAST SURREY FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY** and the recognised address of the Society shall be that of the Secretary.

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the Society shall be:

- a) To promote and encourage the public study of family history, genealogy and heraldry, and related subjects such as local history, with particular reference to the ancient County of Surrey.
- b) To promote the preservation, security and accessibility of archival material.

3. POWERS

In furtherance of the above objects, but not further or otherwise, the Society should have the following powers:

- a) To promote and engage in educational activities including the issue of a regular journal and publication and sale of other appropriate material.
- b) To hold lectures and discussions and organise research visits for Society Members and interested members of the general public.
- c) To hold and maintain a library of printed and other works for the use of Society Members and interested members of the general public.
- d) To preserve, index, transcribe, copy or publish original source materials.
- e) To undertake relevant projects of every kind including (without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing) the recording, transcribing, copying or indexing of archives, manuscripts, registers, records, photographs, portraits, maps, monumental inscriptions and war memorials.
- f) To pursue collaborative actions with similar established supportive bodies, such as churches, libraries, record offices and educational institutions.

4. AFFILIATION

This Society may be a Member of The Federation of Family History Societies (Registered Charity No. 1038721, Company No. 2930189) and shall have the power to guarantee its debts in the event of its insolvency up to the sum of £1. The Society may also affiliate with other charitable organisations whose objects are deemed compatible and mutually supportive.

5. MEMBERSHIP

a) Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons showing genuine interest in the support of the Society's objectives. Application for Membership will be on a prescribed form.

b) The Executive Committee may only refuse an application for Membership if acting reasonably and properly they consider it to be in the best interests of the Society to refuse an application. A decision to refuse an application shall be given in writing to the applicant within 21 days of the decision. The applicant may make written representations about the decision and the Executive Committee must consider these and notify the applicant of their decision in writing within a reasonable time which will be final.

c) Classes of Membership shall be determined by the Executive Committee of the Society and may include categories as Individual, Family, Honorary, Institutional and such other as the Executive Committee of the Society may consider appropriate.

d) Fully paid up Members will have full voting rights in relation to the individuals named in the Membership list. Institutional Membership does not confer voting rights. Membership rights shall not be transferable.

e) Subscriptions shall be payable at the time and rate determined by the Executive Committee of the Society, subject to approval of voting Members at a General Meeting.

f) The Executive Committee shall keep a register of the names and addresses of the Members of the Society and shall be responsible for keeping it up to date and in compliance with current Data Protection legislation.

g) Membership shall be terminated:

- by death or if an Institutional Member it ceasing to exist; or
- by written resignation to the Secretary or other appropriate officer of the Society; or
- if any sum due to the Society from the Member remains unpaid in full within six months of falling due unless the Executive Committee decides by a simple majority there are extenuating circumstances to permit the Membership to continue; or
- if the Executive Committee (by simple majority) resolves that it is in the best interests of the Society that Membership is terminated. Such a resolution may only be passed by the Executive Committee if a) at least 21 days' notice in writing of the meeting at which the resolution will be proposed and the reasons why it is to be proposed is given to the Member and b) such Member or if he or she prefers a representative of the Member (who need not be a Member of the Society) has been given the right to make representations in writing or in person to the Executive Committee before a final decision is taken by the Executive Committee.

6. ADMINISTRATION

a) The Society shall be administered by an Executive Committee consisting of not more than 12 Members, all of whom must be voting Members of the Society. The Honorary Officers of this Committee shall be the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of two thirds of those serving on the Executive Committee (numbers to be rounded up) or a minimum of 4. If necessary, the Chairman has the casting vote. The Committee may invite suitable persons to become Presidents or Vice Presidents. The Committee shall determine those posts which carry the right of Membership of the Committee ex officio. If there be a President or Vice President appointed to the Committee ex officio, they may attend

meetings and speak at meetings of the Committee but shall not be entitled to vote at Committee meetings.

The Officers and other Committee Members shall be elected annually by the Membership and their terms of office shall commence with the declaration of the election results at the AGM.

Nominations – proposed, seconded and accepted by the nominee – should be submitted in writing not less than 7 days before the beginning of the month in which the AGM is to take place.

The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt Members to fill casual vacancies or for any other purpose.

b) Only fully paid up voting Members of the Society present shall be entitled to vote at the General Meeting.

c) All Executive Committee Members shall be eligible for re-election upon completion of their terms of office, but no Member shall serve for longer than five years consecutively. In exceptional circumstances Committee Members may be allowed to serve for a further three years, after which they must stand down.

7. BRANCHES (also known as 'GROUPS')

The Executive Committee shall have the power to establish branches. Each branch so established shall comply with and be subject to the following regulations:

a) The branch shall comply with this Constitution and act in pursuance of the said objects and of the policy of the Society and shall be subject to such conditions as may from time to time be laid down by the Society Executive Committee.

b) The branch shall be deemed to have adopted the Standing Orders for branches as prescribed from time to time by the Society Executive Committee unless it has with the prior approval of the Society Executive Committee adopted other rules.

c) Subscriptions to the Society shall be deemed to be the monies of the Society, although they may be collected through branch officers.

d) Representation of branches on the Society Executive Committee will be as

laid down by the Standing Orders of the Society.

e) The Society shall provide funds to a branch appropriate to its size and activities. A branch may, with the prior agreement of the Society Executive Committee, open a bank account which shall be run in accordance with the policy laid down by the Society. The monies in the branch account shall remain at all times the monies of the Society as a whole. The branch accounts must be kept in such form as may be determined by the Society Executive Committee and shall be subject to annual audit.

f) All printed material, microforms and assets, however acquired, held by the branch shall be the assets of the Society.

g) A branch may be suspended at any time by a resolution of the Society Executive Society and upon suspension shall cease all operations and any assets under its day to day administration shall be frozen until a resolution has been approved at the next AGM dissolving the branch or otherwise.

8. GENERAL MEETINGS

a) An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held no later than April 30th when the Honorary Officers shall present their reports. Notice in writing of this meeting shall be given to Members at least twenty eight days prior to the event. The business of the meeting shall include the election of officers and Members of the Executive Committee; the appointment of an independent examiner; the reports by the Chairman and Treasurer, the laying of the Society's relevant annual accounts before the Members.

b) An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be convened at the request of the Executive Committee or at the request of ten Members having voting rights or one-third of the Membership, whichever is the least, at least 56 days before the meeting, setting out the business to be discussed.

c) A quorum at an AGM or EGM shall be 20 of the Members present or one third of the paid up membership eligible to vote, whichever is the least.

Except as classified in clause 11 below, decisions will be by a simple majority.

d) Only paid-up Members present shall be entitled to vote at an AGM or

EGM.

9. CONSTITUTION

a) The Constitution can be altered or amended only at an AGM or an EGM of the Society at which proper notice has been given and then only if the proposed alteration or amendment receives at least two-thirds of the votes of Society Members present and eligible to vote at the meeting, provided no such alteration or amendment shall cause the Society to cease to be a charity at law.

b) No amendment shall be made to clauses 1. NAME, 2. OBJECTS, 9. CONSTITUTION, 10a) FINANCE or 11. DISSOLUTION without the prior consent in writing of the Charity Commissioners.

c) Proposals for constitutional amendments shall be submitted to the Society Executive Committee at least fifty six days prior to the first day of the month in which the AGM is to be held.

10. FINANCE

a) All income and property of the Society shall be applied solely towards the promotion and execution of the objects of the Society as defined in clause 2 above, and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly in any manner by way of profit to any Member of the Committee of the Society providing that nothing herein shall prevent re-imbusement of reasonable and proper out of pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Society.

b) The Executive Committee shall cause proper books of account to be kept with respect to all sums of money received and expended by the Society and the matters in respect of which such receipts and expenditures take place.

c) The Society's financial year shall commence on 1st January and annual accounts shall be prepared and, where necessary, independently examined as required by law prior to being approved by the Executive Committee and laid before the Members. A copy of the examined accounts shall be made available, as soon as practicable for all Members to see.

11. DISSOLUTION

The Society may be dissolved by a resolution passed by not less than three quarters of those Members present with voting rights at either an Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting called for the purpose and for which 28 days prior notice has been given in writing.

If the Resolution is passed to dissolve the Society the Executive Committee Members shall remain in office as charitable trustees and be responsible for winding up the affairs of the Society. The Executive Committee must collect in all the assets of the Society and must pay or make provision for all the liabilities of the Society.

Such a Resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by the Society after all debts and liabilities have been paid, the balance left to be transferred to some other charitable institution or institutions having objectives similar to those of the Society or in such manner as the Charity Commissioners may approve in writing in advance.

12. TRUSTEES

The Executive Committee may appoint not less than three persons (and not more than six persons) to hold any property held by or in trust for the Society.

13. INDEMNITY TO OFFICERS

The Society shall indemnify members of the Executive Committee of the Society from and against all claims, liabilities and demands and in any respect of all acts done or purported to be done in good faith on behalf of the Society.

14. NOTICES

All notices to be given by or to the Society must be in writing or given by electronic communications. A Member's last known address should be used. A Member present in person at any meeting of the Society shall be deemed to have received notice.

Proof that an envelope was properly addressed, prepaid and posted shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was properly given and proof that a notice contained in an electronic communication was sent shall be conclusive

evidence that the notice was given.

Signed by:

Judith Mitchell

Secretary

Lesley Barker

Treasurer

Approved 22 Apr 2017

Amended 23 Mar 2024 Alan Essex (Secretary)

Amended 5 Apr 2025 Alan Essex (Secretary)