

# Berkshire Family History Society CIO

Registered Charity Number 1204390



## Trustees' Annual Report

for the 12 months to 30 April 2024

### Reference and administrative details of the charity, its Trustees and advisors

The Society was established in 1975 as Berkshire Family History Society. In August 2023 it became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Its new charity registration number is 1204390, previously being charity number 283010.

Its address is The Centre for Heritage and Family History, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Reading Central Library, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 3BQ

### Trustees (and Executive Committee members) in the year ending 30 April 2024

Trustees at 30 April 2024		
Name	Date of appointment (if during the year)	Role
Catherine Sampson		Chairman
Nick Prince		Vice-Chairman
Martin Pilkington		Treasurer
Vanessa Chappell		Secretary
Sandra Barkwith		Bracknell and Wokingham Branch
Gillian Stevens		Computer (Woodley) branch
Nick Prince		Newbury Branch
Vicki Chesterman		Reading Branch
Dave Purling	7 June 2023	Vale of the White Horse (Abingdon) Branch
Leigh Dworkin		Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead Branch
John Dunne		
Andrew Rice		
Paul Barrett		
Alison Pedley	7 June 2023	
Other Trustees during the 12 months to 30 April 2024		
David Wooldridge		
Tony Henty		
Malcolm Gray		

Trustees receive no remuneration for their work on behalf of the Society.

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**Professional Advisors** in the year ending 30 April 2024

**Independent Examiner of Accounts**

Louisa James, 38 Raymond Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 6DF

**Bank**

CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

Shawbrook Bank Ltd, Lutea House, Warley Hill Business Park, The Drive, Great Warley, Brentwood, Essex, CM13 3BE

**Insurance Broker/Intermediary**

PIB Insurance Brokers, Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 1UB

**Solicitors**

Blandy & Blandy LLP, One Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1DA

**Structure, governance and management**

Originally established in 1975 as Berkshire Family History Society, Berkshire Family History Society CIO is registered with the Charity Commission (Registered Charity Number 1204390) as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

**Constitution**

The Society's constitution was written in 2023 to reflect the change to a CIO. This new constitution was adopted in June 2023 by the membership. Trustees will keep the constitution under active review and are satisfied that it remains fully consistent with contemporary requirements and that it properly guides what the charity does and how it operates.

**Executive Committee, Officers and Trustees**

An Executive Committee, comprising no more than 15 Society members, manages the Society's affairs. There are four designated officer posts — chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer. These officers and the additional Trustees form the Society's Executive Committee.

Society members elect the officers and other Trustees at the Annual General Meeting. Each Trustee serves a term of one year and, if eligible, retiring Trustees may be re-elected for a further year. No Trustee may serve more than five consecutive terms without then taking a break from office.

The combination of direct election and set limits to length of Trustee service safeguards continuity and integrity of Society management. It also serves to re-energise it, introducing a small number of new Trustees into the management group each year.

In the year ending 30 April 2024, the Executive Committee met on ten occasions, including a special meeting to approve full year accounts before the Annual General Meeting, two strategy meetings and once to discuss the Society's relocation.

**Sub-committees**

The Society constitution permits the Executive Committee to delegate certain functions to sub-committees. In every case, such sub-committees contain at least one Trustee in their permanent membership together with other Society members. All sub-committees are responsible to the Executive Committee and report to it regularly on their activities and discussions. They also have clearly defined Terms of Reference which are regularly reviewed.

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## **Structure, governance and management (*continued*)**

### **Projects and Publications Sub-committee (PPC)**

Project work represents a major part of the Society's charitable activity. The purpose of this committee is to manage and direct the Society's project work to agreed standards. Key tasks of the PPC include setting project priorities and overseeing the indexing and transcribing of original Berkshire records, the checking of those indexes and transcriptions against original records and bringing project outputs to timely publication in an appropriate form for the benefit of members and the wider public.

### **Research Zone Sub-committee (RZC)**

The Society's premises at The Centre for Heritage and Family History in Reading Central Library, provides Berkshire's foremost facility for family history research. The Centre provides a wide range of online and traditional resources that are regularly used by members of the public and Society members and it also serves as an educational facility.

The Research Zone Committee is responsible for ensuring the efficient day-to-day operation of the services and facilities of the Centre to ensure that the needs and expectations of present-day family historians are recognised and satisfied effectively.

### **Education and Events Sub-committee**

This group focuses on the organisation and delivery of events that promote understanding of social, local and family history through regular series of talks, walks, workshops and courses. This group also arranges for Berkshire Family History Society to be represented at fairs and open days. The group reports its activities and plans to the Executive Committee.

### **Marketing and Communications Sub-committee (incorporating the Website Team)**

This group oversees the design and functionality of the Society's signage and promotional material. The group feeds back to the Executive Committee regularly. The Website Team, originally raised to create the Society's new website and one for its shop (run by its subsidiary – Berkshire Family History Enterprises), now continues to develop the websites and within its part of the Marketing and Communications Group, continues to produce regular email newsletters to members.

### **IT Working Group**

This group manages the IT purchases and infrastructure for the Society including AV, telephony and connectivity into The Centre, with the exception of the website, which is managed by the Marketing and Communications Group (above); identify, test and cost the implementation of third party software; and manage the Society's email delivery systems. The Group will develop policies, practices and procedures and how-to-guides relative to the Society IT equipment, including security of data. The Group reports its activities and findings to the Executive Committee.

### **Branches and Branch Sub-committees**

The constitution empowers the Executive Committee to set up Branches to further the objectives of the Society. The Society has six local branches that are active across the historic Royal County of Berkshire. Branch Committees — nominated and elected by local members at their respective annual meetings — run these branches and report to the Executive Committee on their activities. From their Branch Committee members, each branch proposes a representative for election at the Society AGM to serve as a Society Trustee and to represent that branch on the Executive Committee for the next year. Each Branch Committee thus contains at least one Trustee member.

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## **Structure, governance and management (*continued*)**

### **Policies and Procedures Sub-committee**

This group is tasked with ensuring that all our policies and procedures are rigorous and current. They look at the formation of new policies or procedures should they be necessary to the effective and lawful work of the Society. The Group meets at least 5 times a year and reports directly to the Executive Committee.

### **Volunteers**

Day-to-day activities, such as staffing The Centre for Heritage and Family History, assisting researchers, and indexing and transcribing of records — to give three examples — are all undertaken by volunteers, none of whom receive remuneration for their work. There are no employees or paid staff.

Like many voluntary organisations, the Society finds increasing difficulty in attracting and retaining a sufficiently large core of committed helpers to ensure that it continues to function effectively and, more importantly, to tackle the multiple challenges of today's operating environment. The Society, its membership and the wider public are all indebted to that small group of volunteers that continues to take responsibility for a disproportionate number of the tasks that the Society has to address if it is to remain a meaningful and successful organisation.

Since the beginning of 2016, the Society's quarterly magazine has been produced by an editorial panel.

### **Berkshire Family History Enterprises Ltd (BFHE)**

BFHE is a trading company wholly owned by the Society and registered with Companies House, Number 04733795. In the year to 31 March 2024, its directors were – Chad Hanna (Chairman), Ivan Dickason (Managing Director), Tony Roberts, Catherine Sampson and Paul Barrett. The company pays the Society for its proportionate use of Society premises and facilities, retails products purchased from the Society and other bodies, and donates any surplus profit generated to the Society. In the year ending 31 March 2024, BFHE again traded successfully, with unwavering support throughout the year from a small and dedicated operating team.

### **Risk Assessment**

Financial and other major risks to which the Society and its operations could be exposed are subject to regular and ongoing assessment. Established procedures are in place to manage those risks and these are kept under active review.

During the year under review the Trustees have continued to monitor the handling and storage of personal information (UK General Data Protection Regulation 2021). This led to a review of our procedures and updating of our current policies regarding Data Protection.

In addition to this we took the opportunity to review all our policies regarding health and safety, and risk assessed our premises to ensure a safe environment for our volunteers and visitors.

### **Public benefit**

The Trustees give full and careful consideration to their obligations under the Charities Act, 2011 (consolidating earlier legislation) and the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016, to report on public benefit, and to do so in accordance with current Charity Commission guidance.

The principal benefits provided by Berkshire Family History Society fall within two primary descriptions contained in Section 3 of the Charities Act, 2011:

- ❖ advancement of education — in the fields of genealogy and family history; and
- ❖ advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science — and particularly the advancement of related heritage issues

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## Structure, governance and management (*continued*)

Its activities also contribute to improvement of the historic environment and to heritage conservation. The Society's first objective (see below) addresses public education. Family history research remains one of the most popular interests for people of all ages, backgrounds and nationalities. Many who set out to research their family's ancestry do not always have the understanding, research expertise, perspectives and skills that are needed to conduct research effectively. The skill set and experience required to find and to prove family links and connections are not easily acquired without ready access to traditional and online resources, and to informed help, support and advice — all of which Berkshire Family History Society is well positioned and able to offer.

The Society's second objective addresses public benefit directly, for present and future generations. That benefit derives from all that the Society does to help and to support the preservation, care and responsible use of the archival heritage of the historic Royal County of Berkshire.

This report illustrates how the Society has delivered public benefit in the past year.

- ❖ benefits are readily available to all members of the public — in Berkshire and further afield
- ❖ benefits are easy to access for many — at The Centre for Heritage and Family History, centrally located in Reading
- ❖ benefits are delivered actively to local Berkshire communities, through an extensive programme of branch meetings, events at The Centre for Heritage and Family History and outreach events
- ❖ benefits are made available, wherever practicable, free of charge at the point of delivery\*

\* Where the Society has paid to subscribe to key products and services from outside organisations, a user fee may be payable. Such fees are nominal and make only a modest contribution towards offsetting the costs incurred in providing the service.

Central and local government funding continues to fall for local and national archive services, libraries (including local studies), heritage events and continuing adult education. The Trustees seek to ensure that, whenever practicable, services provided by the Society take due account of the ramifications of local changes in levels of public funding and support. The Society seeks to deliver services of good value to all family historians — wherever their research interests may lay, whatever the extent of their research experience and whether or not they are Society members.

Throughout the past year we have continued to run face-to-face activities, as well as maintaining, and even expanding, our online activities for the public benefit. This has enabled us to continue to attract a new audience from all over the UK and overseas, as well as re-engaging with previous audiences who were not able to access online offerings.

## Objectives and Activities

### Objectives

The objectives of the Society are:

**To advance education of the public in research into family history and genealogy, primarily but not exclusively within the boundaries of the pre-1974 Royal County of Berkshire;**

and

**To work to promote the preservation, transcription, indexing and ready public accessibility of related records and information.**

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## Objectives and Activities (*continued*)

### **Activities: Public benefit**

This section summarises where the Society's efforts have been directed in the year under review:

- ❖ managing The Centre for Heritage and Family History in Reading to ensure that Berkshire's foremost facility for family history research remains compliant with any prevailing guidance regarding public health issues
- ❖ facilitating the continuation of one out of three of our paid for family history website subscriptions to be available to members from their homes, outside of our Centre for Heritage Family History opening hours, enabling personal family history research on a local, national and international scale
- ❖ benefits are made available, wherever practicable, free of charge at the point of delivery\*
- ❖ organising meetings each month either online or face-to-face, covering our six branches in the historic county of Berkshire — at Abingdon, Bracknell, Newbury, Reading, Windsor and Computer — open to all
- ❖ monthly evening informal sessions online to discuss and enlighten on particular topics
- ❖ holding online and face-to-face advice sessions (all free-of-charge events)
- ❖ supporting community organised events, including Heritage Open Days
- ❖ giving talks and presentations on family history research to community organisations
- ❖ producing and publishing a 44-page quality quarterly journal — *Berkshire Family Historian*
- ❖ publishing a bi-weekly email newsletter for our members and on alternate weeks a bi-weekly events newsletter for members and non-members
- ❖ maintaining an online forum, to host a valuable interchange of questions, answers, news and ideas for Society members worldwide
- ❖ continuing activities in an online format as well as running face-to-face events, thus maintaining the accessibility to those living at a distance from Berkshire.

### **Activities: Public education**

- ❖ providing, maintaining and pro-actively developing a website [berksfhs.org](https://berksfhs.org). This was constantly under review to ensure that it was up to date, made full use of the latest technology and provided a pleasant and easy user experience. It offers substantial free content on general research principles, research in Berkshire, and on Society activities
- ❖ utilising social media (Twitter and Facebook) to reach family and local historians
- ❖ maintaining the Berkshire pages of GENUKI (UK and Ireland Genealogy) a virtual reference library for Berkshire local and family history research interests
- ❖ providing online workshops, courses, talks, and special interest groups designed to increase knowledge of family, local and social history

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## Objectives and Activities (*continued*)

- ❖ answering questions and providing one-to-one online and in-person advice session, as well as via telephone or email or on social media

### **Activities: Preservation, transcription, indexing, public accessibility of information**

This section summarises where the Society's efforts have been directed in the year under review:

- ❖ indexing and transcribing of original records, including parish register data and historic newspaper articles, for publication in CD format, downloaded PDF, and online; this greatly reduces the need for frequent or direct access to fragile original documents, and enables wider and improved access to such records
- ❖ recording, photographing and mapping memorial inscriptions, including war memorials, across the county, and publishing this information so as to preserve details for future generations; this is important as many monuments and inscriptions are unlikely to survive due to headstones being moved, eroded by weather and pollution, or vandalised
- ❖ securing online publication of the Society's transcriptions on **findmypast** (previously DC Thomson Family History) website, with support from the Royal Berkshire Archives (formerly Berkshire Record Office)
- ❖ maintaining The Centre for Heritage and Family History, run by Society members, where visitors may access worldwide online resources, CD datasets, microfilm records, and a library of printed material
- ❖ providing a general source of advice on family history matters to all
- ❖ representing family history and genealogical interests on local bodies, including the Standing Conference on Archives for Berkshire
- ❖ through a wholly owned subsidiary organisation an online shop is provided retailing Society publications and specialist items from other sources
- ❖ maintaining and continually improving a digital service (YourTrees) for our members to upload their family trees for viewing by other members
- ❖ providing free replacement baptism registers to Berkshire's smaller churches, in conjunction with the Royal Berkshire Archives (formerly Berkshire Record Office), to enable them to deposit their longstanding, but not yet full, registers for safekeeping with the Royal Berkshire Archives
- ❖ donating funds to the Royal Berkshire Archives for replacement computers within their search room

## Achievements in the year ending 30 April 2024

The achievements of the Society during the past year are set out below:

- ❖ retaining our Society President, who has immense standing within the Berkshire, and national, community
- ❖ retaining 1,067 paid Society memberships (single, family and overseas), representing about 1,250 family historians (a continued robust achievement in a challenging operating climate). This is a slight decrease on the previous year's figures
- ❖ organising and running 50 branch meetings online and face-to-face with over 1050 recorded attendees (of which a total of just over 5% were not Society members). This is down around 350 on last year's figures. There was a noticeable reduction in face-to-face branch attendances with a

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## Achievements in the year ending 30 April 2024 *(continued)*

continued hesitancy of people to rejoin group meetings, with online meetings being better attended

- ❖ running branch and other face-to-face meetings alongside a range of online activities that also have the effect of widening participation to include the whole of the UK and abroad
- ❖ continuing bi-annual Combined Branches Meetings where we can access more renowned speakers, and attract much larger audiences over 140 attendees for the year in review
- ❖ continuing the recording of branch meetings, subject to agreement by the speaker, for access by our members on our website, so that those who could not attend can still access the meeting content
- ❖ recording of family history courses for access by all on our website
- ❖ recording video tours for access by our members on our website
- ❖ creating and delivering a programme of events held online and face-to-face, including 25 social history talks, 12 family, social and local history workshops, 2 family, social and local history courses, 14 guided tours and walks, 2 tours of the Centre for Heritage and Family History, 22 advice sessions 11 natter groups and a day school
- ❖ continuing face-to-face advice sessions at The Centre for Heritage and Family History
- ❖ maintaining a DNA interest group run by a nationally noted expert and author in this field that met on 4 occasions online
- ❖ delivering another county Heritage Fair (the second ever), a joint online venture with Berkshire Local History Association, with 30 'stallholders' and, again, attracting over 200 attendees
- ❖ supporting local family history societies by attending 1 virtual fair that they organised
- ❖ supporting popular Heritage Open Day events in September 2023 over 3 days welcoming visitors to The Centre for Heritage and Family History and running a talk especially for the event
- ❖ giving talks and presentations
- ❖ maintaining members discounts on Society products and events
- ❖ improving services and facilities for researchers at The Centre for Heritage and Family History in Reading with regular maintenance and upgrade of the available computers
- ❖ opening The Centre for Heritage and Family History, with regular reviewing of safety procedures and our opening hours, and extending our opening hours when possible
- ❖ cataloguing of our reference library and launching the catalogue online to aid visitors to The Centre for Heritage and Family History
- ❖ reviewing and updating point of sale processes to improve our customer experience
- ❖ welcoming 442 people into The Centre for Heritage and Family History (over 60 more than in the previous year), of which 38% were non-members
- ❖ attracting 1375 members and visitors during the year to attend online and face-to-face events (of which nearly 30% were not Society members)(figures include visitors from Canada, America, Europe, Australia and all over the UK). The attendance figure is slightly down on last year, but the proportion of non-members has increased

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## Achievements in the year ending 30 April 2024 (*continued*)

- ❖ welcoming 71 people to our library drop-in advice sessions, family history surgery sessions and other events arranged and run by Society members across historic and modern Berkshire — at Bracknell, Wokingham, Newbury, Faringdon and Reading. This is an increase on the number who attended the previous year. We were able to hold 33 sessions. Of the 71 people who attended, 17% were non-members
- ❖ continuing online publication on **findmypast** of more Berkshire parish registers transcribed by Society volunteers and widening public access to them
- ❖ retaining a discount to **findmypast** for our members
- ❖ continuing refinement of the Society website, with upgraded website security, the addition of new web pages and a number of datasets and data extracts
- ❖ expanding our electronic journal exchange with other family history societies
- ❖ internal reviewing of our Code of Conduct, Office Risk Assessment, Privacy and Data Protection Policies, and an independent external review of our Health and Safety Policy, to ensure currency and compliance
- ❖ attracting a healthy number of posts from members on the online Members Forum
- ❖ strengthening the Society presence on Twitter ([@BerkshireFHS](#)) and branch presence on Facebook as a means of extending communication with Society stakeholders
- ❖ supporting a Society volunteer in maintaining the Berkshire pages of GENUKI — the searchable virtual reference library for the UK and Ireland — where Berkshire pages, including Towns and Villages and the Berkshire Church database, are now essentially 'complete'
- ❖ indexing and transcribing additional Berkshire records, including parish registers and monumental inscriptions and progressing them for future CD and online publication
- ❖ preparation for and release of a further 108 purchasable data downloads covering marriages and banns across the county
- ❖ continuing work on the production of a new CD covering *Winkfield Parish Registers*, also CDs on *Bray Parish Registers*, *Tilehurst St Michaels Memorial Inscriptions*, *Windsor Memorial Inscriptions*, and *Berkshire Baptisms (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> ed.s)*
- ❖ creating a Berkshire Name Index accessible via our website
- ❖ preparation of more burial data downloads
- ❖ ongoing work on a further batch of parish register transcriptions and burial ground monumental inscriptions recording, and also on recording war memorials in the county
- ❖ publishing in print and online four issues of the Berkshire Family Historian each with 44 A4 pages, with copies sent to all members and mailed, by request, to libraries and other organisations
- ❖ promoting the involvement and development of young people through the engagement of a college student as videographer for the Society, and continued engagement of a student graphic designer
- ❖ maintaining healthy accounts in light of economic uncertainty and rising costs
- ❖ continuing a regular fortnightly email newsletter to members and non-members with advice on family history matters and links to related events and publications, as well as continuing to produce a fortnightly events email newsletter

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## **Achievements in the year ending 30 April 2024 (*continued*)**

- ❖ providing complimentary back-copies of the Society's journal to visitors to The Centre for Heritage and Family History and the Berkshire record Office
- ❖ donating new computers to the Royal Berkshire Archives for use by visitors in their reading room

This short summary reveals the scale of the collective investment of knowledge, skills and time that volunteers make to the work of the Berkshire Family History Society. Their support is vital for the Society to continue to deliver public benefits — not just in Reading and across Berkshire but nationally and internationally.

The Trustees would like to record their recognition and appreciation of the contribution made by those volunteers and of the level of support they bring to the Society, its products and services.

## **Financial review**

### **Incoming resources**

Total Society income in the year to 30 April 2024 was £41,615 (LY£45,124).

Our overall total income decreased from the 2022/2023 figure, this change is attributable to a decrease in the income from donations.

Gift Aid income did not come through in the year in question. The donation of £2,680 from Berkshire Family History Enterprises is £1,620 down on that in the year 2022/2023. Interest in print publications has continued to show a slight downturn during the year.

Royalty income from online publication of Society transcriptions has remained steady.

Income from events has increased slightly by nearly 4%.

### **Resources expended**

Overall, Society income was less than the operating costs of £54,779 (LY £41,157) to generate a loss of £13,164 (LY £3,967). This is primarily due to spending on upgrading our IT equipment and an increase in the cost of subscription packages for use within The Centre for Heritage and Family History. Since the last report we have continued to be settled in our new premises at The Centre for Heritage and Family History, within Reading town centre. Unfortunately, we are aware that we will need to move premises within the next year.

The objectives remain to cover all forecast management, administrative and support costs incurred by the Society and to replace or upgrade Society assets when indicated.

### **Financial Reserves**

It is Society policy to maintain a general reserve that is at least equivalent to a minimum of twelve months' unrestricted fund expenditure at prevailing levels.

In addition, the Society seeks to generate sufficient income to enable support to be given to deserving local archival initiatives and projects at the Trustees' discretion and to allow for support of specific educational projects.

The Trustees consider this to be the proper level at which to preserve the Society's financial integrity.

Trustees actively review all elements of the Society's cumulative financial performance, including expenditure against annually agreed pre-approval limits, on a bi-monthly basis.

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## **Financial review (*continued*)**

The Trustees appreciate the current reserves are maintained at 29 months expenditure. Now that we have physically and financially settled into our new premises, The Centre for Heritage and Family History, the Trustees are looking to give support to archival projects and will look to reduce reserves while retaining a prudent level of retained reserves. Trustees are also mindful that in the near future significant capital may be needed to secure new premises.

### **Looking forward**

As the UK economy continues to suffer in uncertain times, the Trustees recognise the scale of the challenge to maintain or, better still, to increase income from membership fees, donations, and the provision of educational events available to all.

The Trustees appreciate that family history research is not an inexpensive pastime. They accept that the Society must invest more in effective, wider-reaching public and member promotion to create and raise awareness of its services. The Society has also to work to counter a mistaken belief among many researchers that online publishers now offer all that they need for successful research.

The skill mix required by family history societies from their volunteers is widening steadily, particularly in applications of information technology in the research process itself and in the Society's management. Where such skills cannot be found readily from within the Society's volunteer group, the Trustees acknowledge that they may well have to consider non-member volunteers or paying to acquire necessary technical skill sets.

The Trustees had consciously held back from giving major financial support to archival initiatives but we did make a donation of new equipment to the Royal Berkshire Archives (formerly Berkshire Record Office) to further their work. Future potential projects are regularly discussed in outline with Royal Berkshire Archives.

The Trustees are aware that the Society will need to move premises, most likely within the next year, due to the closure of the building we currently occupy. The aim is that this will not impact a majority of the Society's activities, but it is anticipated there will be a significant financial impact.

Not least, Trustees recognise that returns from the Society's investments are likely to remain at very modest levels in the near to medium term. Any realistic opportunities to improve on those returns will be kept under active review.

Looking forward, the Berkshire Family History Society will seek to broadly maintain current levels of income, at the same time continuing to explore wider applications of technology to contain increases in costs likely to be seen in traditional areas of expenditure.

## **Planning for 2024/2025**

The Trustees have identified eleven key tasks and initiatives for the coming year:

- ❖ to complete the Society's move in charitable status to that of a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation)
- ❖ to bring Berkshire Family History Enterprises back under the management of Berkshire Family History Society
- ❖ to seek and secure future premises for the Society actively

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## Planning for 2024/2025 (continued)

- ❖ to maintain current rates of indexing and transcribing of original Berkshire records and, consistent with high quality data standards, publishing further transcriptions of Berkshire baptisms, marriages and burials as 'state of the art' CDs, data downloads and also online
- ❖ to continue developing the Society website, by extending content, developing online membership services, and embracing access implications for mobile devices. Also strengthening evaluation techniques to make increased use of traditional and electronic media to raise awareness of the Society and its products and services in order to increase public support and sustain membership numbers
- ❖ to build on the programme of regular outreach activities across the historic Royal County of Berkshire to increase the Society's public visibility and public interaction, while striving to maintain and bolster online alternatives for those who are out-of-county
- ❖ to continue to develop education and information services that can facilitate greater engagement between the Society, other family historians and other historians
- ❖ to secure additional volunteers, some of whom will have particular specialist skills, and all of whom have a genuine commitment to help to drive forward the next stages of the Society's development
- ❖ to continue supporting a sub-committee structure which helps establish the expectations of family historians and prepare to meet those expectations, incorporating and developing in detail some of the initiatives described above
- ❖ to review the structure and scope of the sub-committees supporting the Trustees Executive Committee
- ❖ to organise and host more online Berkshire Heritage Fairs in association with the Berkshire Local History Association
- ❖ to organise a one day conference and series of associated visits to celebrate the Society's 50th anniversary

## Approval

The Trustees of Berkshire Family History Society CIO approved this report on 24th January 2025. It is signed on their behalf by two Trustees, Vanessa Chappell, Society Secretary during the year under review, and Catherine Sampson, the Society Chairman during the year under review.

Signed

V. Chappell, Secretary

Signed

C. Sampson, Chairman

Date

30 January 2025





**BERKSHIRE  
FAMILY HISTORY  
SOCIETY**

**Financial statements  
for the year ending  
30 April 2024**

**Registered Charity No. 1204390**

# **BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

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# **BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

## **Independent examiner's report**

I report on the accounts of Berkshire Family History Society for the year ended 30 April 2024, which are set out on the following seven pages.

### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required (under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act)
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act)
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the trustees have not met the requirements
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act
- or 2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Louisa James  
38 Raymond Road  
Maidenhead  
Berkshire  
SL6 6Df

*LMJames*

Date: 26/9/2024

# BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

## Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 30 April 2024

	<i>Note</i>	<b>2024</b> <b>£</b>	<b>2023</b> <b>£</b>
<b>INCOME FROM</b>			
Voluntary income		25,587	30,905
Activities for generating funds		35	-
Investment income		2,614	949
Charitable activities		13,379	13,270
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>41,615</b>	<b>45,124</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Raising funds		11,623	10,948
Charitable activities		43,156	30,209
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>54,779</b>	<b>41,157</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>		<b>- 13,164</b>	<b>3,967</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD</b>		<b>147,657</b>	<b>143,690</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>134,494</b>	<b>147,657</b>

The notes form part of these financial statements.



# BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

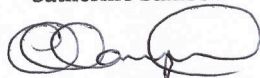
## Balance Sheet at 30 April 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Tangible assets	5	0	0
<b>TOTAL FIXED ASSETS</b>		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Debtors	6	7,248	7,231
Deposit account		52,541	52,176
Cash at bank and in hand		106,518	100,722
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>166,307</u>	<u>160,129</u>
<b>CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year</b>			
Accruals	7	(31,814)	(12,472)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	7	0	0
<b>TOTAL CREDITORS</b>		<u>(31,814)</u>	<u>(12,472)</u>
<b>TOTAL NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>134,494</u>	<u>147,657</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS LIABILITIES</b>		<u>134,494</u>	<u>147,657</u>
<b>FUNDS OF THE CHARITY</b>			
Unrestricted funds			
General		130,494	143,657
Education	8	4,000	4,000
<b>TOTAL FUNDS OF THE CHARITY</b>		<u>134,494</u>	<u>147,657</u>


The Trustees consider that the company is entitled to exemption from the requirement to have an audit under the provisions of section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 ("the Act") and members have not required the company to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Act.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements. The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on th May 2022 and signed on their behalf, by

Catherine Samson



Martin Pilkington



Date: 2024

28/10/2024

Date: 2024

21/10/24

The notes on pages 4 to 8 form part of these financial statements.

# **BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

## **Notes to the accounts for the year to 30 April 2024**

### **1 Accounting Policies**

#### **1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2015) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The Berkshire Family History Society meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102.

#### **1.2 Organisation status**

The charity is an unincorporated organisation.

#### **1.3 Fund accounting**

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

There are no funds which have been restricted by specific restrictions imposed by donors. All funds are unrestricted.

#### **1.4 Income**

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income can be measured reliably.

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent that goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

#### **1.5 Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.



# **BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

## **Notes to the accounts for the year to 30 April 2024 (continued)**

### **1.6 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the costs of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following bases:

Computer equipment – 33% straight line

Office equipment – 20% straight line

### **1.7 Interest Receivable**

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

### **1.8 Debtors**

Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

### **1.9 Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

### **1.10 Liabilities**

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity estimates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payment for goods or services it must provide.

### **1.11 Financial Instruments**

The charity only has financial instruments of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

# BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

## Notes to the accounts for the year to 30 April 2024 (contd)

### 2 Analysis of income

	2024 £	2023 £
Shop	302	
Subscriptions	20,266	20,620
HM Revenue & Customs - Gift Aid	-	2,358
Donations	5,019	7,927
<b>Total Voluntary income</b>	<b>25,587</b>	<b>30,905</b>
Advertising	35	-
<b>Activities for generating funds</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>-</b>
Bank interest	2,614	949
<b>Investment income</b>	<b>2,614</b>	<b>949</b>
Events	6,044	5,843
Berkshire name search and birth briefs	-	45
Royalties	6,992	6,813
Printing and copying	115	68
Branch activity	100	320
Miscellaneous income	128	180
<b>Charitable activities</b>	<b>13,379</b>	<b>13,270</b>
<b>Total income</b>	<b>41,615</b>	<b>45,124</b>

### 3 Analysis of expenditure

	2024 £	2023 £
Magazine publication	11,623	10,948
<b>Costs of raising funds</b>	<b>11,623</b>	<b>10,948</b>
Bank and card charges	749	798
Lease of premises	20,542	13,441
Recharges to Berkshire Family History Enterprises	(4,736)	(4,540)
Insurance	1,854	1,712
Meeting halls and speakers	2,165	1,652
Events	2,689	1,328
Branch activity	171	663
Computer costs	15,833	7,189
Depreciation	-	757
Equipment maintenance	483	223
Subscriptions - Find My Past, Genealogist, etc.	2,454	732
Office expenses	953	6,256
<b>Charitable activities</b>	<b>43,156</b>	<b>30,209</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>54,779</b>	<b>41,157</b>

<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,164</b>	<b>3,967</b>
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		147,657	143,690
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>134,494</b>	<b>147,657</b>



# BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

## Notes to the accounts for the year to 30 April 2024 (continued)

### 4 Details of certain items of expenditure

	2024	2023
Trustee expenses		
Number of trustees who were paid expenses	1	4
Total paid - reimbursement of costs.	£0	£103

### 5 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

All tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation for the year has been calculated to write off the cost of tangible assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives – between three and five years.

	Computer equipment £	Other equipment £	Total 2024 £	Computer equipment £	Other equipment £	Total 2023 £
<b>Cost</b>						
Brought forward	12,397	21,044	33,441	12,397	21,044	33,441
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	0
	<b>12,397</b>	<b>21,044</b>	<b>33,441</b>	<b>12,397</b>	<b>21,044</b>	<b>33,441</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>						
Brought forward	12,397	21,044	33,441	11,640	21,044	32,684
Charge for the year	0	0	0	757		757
Disposals	-	-	-	0	0	0
	<b>12,397</b>	<b>21,044</b>	<b>33,441</b>	<b>12,397</b>	<b>21,044</b>	<b>33,441</b>
<b>Net book value</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### 6 Debtors and prepayments

	2024 £	2023 £
Owed by Berkshire Family History Enterprises Ltd	3,928	3,873
Prepayments and accrued income	3,320	3,359
Other debtors	-	-
<b>Total debtors</b>	<b>7,248</b>	<b>7,231</b>

# BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

## Notes to the accounts for the year to 30 April 2024(continued)

7	<b>Accruals</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Accruals	<u>31,814</u>	<u>12,472</u>

### 8 **Unrestricted funds - Education**

The trustees have decided to devote a portion of the unrestricted funds of the Society to advance the knowledge of Family History.

The Trustees have agreed that the amount of £4,000 should be retained in the Education Fund for the year 2023/24

### 9 **Transactions with related parties**

At 30th April 2024, the balance owed by Berkshire Family History Enterprises Limited, which is a wholly owned trading company of the Society, was £3,928 (2023: £3,873). This is a trading balance between the Society and the Company at the end of the year.

Income includes a donation of £2,680 (2023: £4,300) from Berkshire Family History Enterprises Limited. An estimate of utilities to be recharged of £0 is included with debtors and prepayments. A proportion of rent and other costs have been recharged to the company amounting to £4,736 (2023 £4,673).

### 10 **Independent examiners remuneration**

The Independent examiners remuneration amounted to a fee of £50.

### 11 **Staff costs**

The charity employed no staff during the year. All work was carried out by volunteers.