

Sussex Family History Group

Charity Registration No 273726



Annual Report and Financial Statement

for Year Ended 31st December 2024

Sussex Family History Group

Registered Charity 273726

The 51st Annual General Meeting of the Sussex Family History Group

To be held on Saturday 17th May 2025 at 2.15pm

At

Adastra Hall Hassocks

AGENDA

- 1. Apologises for Absence**
- 2. Acknowledgement of representatives of subscribing societies**
- 3. Accept the minutes of the 50th AGM**
- 4. Matters arising from the minutes**
- 5. Chairman's report on the activities of the past year**
- 6. Treasurer's report and to approve the accounts**
- 7. Election of the Officers and members of the Executive Committee**
- 8. Nomination and confirmation of the appointment of the Independent
Examiners of the accounts**
- 9. To discuss and take decisions on any submitted motions**
- 10. To approve the annual subscription for the following year – 2026**
- 11. Any other business**
- 12. Date and Venue of the next meeting**

Sussex Family History Group

Registered Charity 273726

Minutes of the 50th Annual General Meeting held at Bramber House Sussex

University, on Saturday 11 May 2024

Present – Judy Excell (President); Mick Henry (Chairman) and 69 members.

Judy Excell welcomed everybody to the meeting and gave a brief history of the AGMs.

1. Apologies for Absence

Terry Mitchell. Dave Wicks, Alan Beattie and John Chalcraft.

2. Acknowledgement of Representatives of Subscribing Societies

There were no Subscribing Societies present.

3. Minutes of the 49th Annual General Meeting

It was proposed (Jan Baker) seconded (Sue Burgess) and agreed that the Minutes were a true record of the 49th Annual General Meeting.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

5. Chairman's Report on the activities of the past Year

We have had Zoom Talks which had gone down well, and this was going to be tried out in Brighton and Hove Meeting Centre as a “hybrid” meeting. This would also give an opportunity for housebound or overseas members to join in the meetings.

We had visited the Grand Hotel for an afternoon tea to celebrate our 50th gathering.

All attenders received a celebration paper weight commemorating the occasion.

We have made huge progress with the data going on the new website. There was an appeal for more members to help with getting the data ready for going on the website.

The Oxley Diaries will be published this year. The Sussex Record Society will be printing and publishing the book, and we will be ordering extra copies.

The Keep is still struggling with footfall, as is the West Sussex Record Office.

We gave a generous donation to West Sussex Record Office last year, and again this year.

If anyone has any articles for the magazine, or ideas, they should contact the editor.

During the past year, Mick had helped trace the birth father of Carl Benson using a DNA test. This appeared in the Sunday Times magazine and as a podcast on BBC Wales.

The Chairman's report was proposed by Zena Gibbs, seconded by Brian Eaton and unanimously approved.

6. Treasurer Report

There was a deficit for the year of £8221; in 2022 the surplus was £5137. Total funds carried forward at 31st December 2023 were £244,280, slightly down on the previous year which was £252,501. No part of this represents designated or restricted funds. The Trustees' policy is to retain cash reserves equal to approximately one year's expenditure. On 31st December 2023 we had £258,874 in the bank and building society, which is about £1,000 down on the previous year. Of this £2798 was in a deposit account and £80,000 was in a building society. This is the same as last year, but the deposit account has gone down.

We currently hold funds in excess of one year's expenditure and this has been as a result of the uncertainty over the costs relating to The Keep. Our current lease ended at the end of September 2023 and discussions are taking place to renew. We have now got a new lease, but it is only a five-year lease.

We have got a new Independent Examiner, and Terry would like to thank her for the professional way she has dealt with our accounts.

Proposed by Malcolm Willis; seconded by Roy Winchester and approved unanimously.

7. Election of Officers and Members of the Executive Committee

Chairman	Michael J Henry
Vice Chairman	Michael Izzard
Treasurer	Terry Mitchell
Secretary	Jean Spilsted
Committee Members	Dave Wicks, Vee Willis, Brian Eaton, Kathleen Allen, Jean Donaldson

The Officers and Committee Members were elected unanimously.

8. Nomination and confirmation of the appointment of the Independent Examiners of the Accounts

Mrs Chaweevan Williams was proposed by Terry Mitchell and seconded by Mike Izzard

9. To approve the annual subscription for the following year.

It was proposed by (Terry Mitchell) and seconded (Sue Wright) not to increase the subscription; this was agreed unanimously.

10. Any other Business

A member asked about renewal of the Lease – the costs have gone up in line with inflation. Mick explained that we were not paying for the hire of the Phil Lucas room but the upkeep of the building we were in.

11. Saturday 10th May 2025. (Altered to 17th May 2025, at the Adastra Hall, Hassocks).

The meeting closed at 2.48 p.m.

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Agenda item 9 - Changes to the Constitution proposed by the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee proposes that Section F Membership is updated to read as follows:

A MEMBERSHIP

- 1 Membership of the Charity shall be open to:
 - (i) individuals who are interested in furthering the work of the Charity and who have paid the annual subscription approved at the Annual General Meeting.
 - (ii) any corporate or unincorporated association which is interested in furthering the Charity's objectives (any such body being called in this constitution an "honorary member organisation").
- 2 The Executive Committee may unanimously and for good reason terminate the membership of any individual or honorary member organisation provided that the individual, or representative of the honorary member organisation, concerned shall have the right to be heard by the Executive Committee, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.
- 3 There shall be three classes of membership:
 - (i) full membership of one or two persons registered at the same address, with the entitlement of one vote each at General & Special General Meetings.
 - (ii) any corporate or unincorporated association which is interested in furthering the Charity's objectives may become an honorary member organisation entitling them to a free printed copy of the Sussex Family Historian and no other rights and privileges.
 - (iii) Honorary Life membership, where a member, who having acted in a manner deemed to be outstanding in the view of not less than five other members, including one officer, and confirmed by a majority of Executive Committee members, may be elected by the members at an Annual General meeting. Such Honorary Life members shall have the same rights and privileges as full members.

Rational for change

The change is designed to simplify the systems that we use to control our membership details and hence make the work of our volunteers less time consuming.

In the changing world of our wonderful hobby, the Executive Committee needs to continue to ensure that the charity evolves in the current climate and works together with similar organisations. Hence the change to status of these organisations.

The Executive Committee proposes that Section L Receipts and Expenditure section 3 be amended as follows:

Removal of last sentence "The Executive Committee shall have discretion to remit part of the annual subscription for membership commencing in the last quarter of the year."

The Executive Committee proposes that Section R General Meetings – Annual & Special section 5 be amended as follows:

Item (ii) to be removed from the business of the meeting

Agenda item 10 - To approve the annual subscription for the following year – 2026

The proposal for the change to the membership fee is in line with the proposal to change the membership structure, as outlined in Agenda item 9.

The proposed fees from January 2026, the first change for 10 years and will simplify the processes that the charity must undertake to maintain our records.

It is proposed to remove the differential rates across the membership of the charity.

The annual subscription for full membership, irrespective of members location, based on one or two persons at the same address will, if accepted be £17 per annum.

Honorary Member organisations will no longer pay a subscription but may wish to donate.

Consideration was given to the added costs for such as sending the magazine abroad, but this was seen to be offset by the costs incurred by providing other benefits such as meeting centres.

Sussex Family History Group

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Nominations for Officers and Members of the Executive Committee

POSITION	NAME	Proposed by	Seconded by
Chairman	Michael Izzard	Mike Morley	Peter Holt
Vice Chairman	Vacant		
Treasurer	Michael J Izzard	Mike Morley	Peter Holt
Secretary	Jean Spilsted	Mick Izzard	Sue Burgess
Committee	David J Wicks	Judy Excell	Christine Payne
	Vee Willis	Christine Payne	Ann Ashwell
	Kathleen Allen	Malcolm Willis	Ann Ashwell
	Jean Donaldson		
	Sue Burgess	John Saunders	Penny Golding
	Guy Rogers	Sue Burgess	Michael Izzard
	Stanley Bernard	Michael Izzard	David Green



Sussex Family History Group

Registered Charity No. 273726

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements

For the Year ended 31st December 2024

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Charity Registration number 273726

TRUSTEES

Michael Henry	Chairman
Michael Izzard	Vice Chairman
Terence Mitchell	Treasurer
Jean Spilsted	Secretary

Correspondence Address

10 Fairford Close, Haywards Heath
West Sussex RH16 3EF

Independent Examiner

Chaweevan Williams FCCA
Verdant Accounts Ltd
20 – 22 Wenlock Road
London N1 7GU

Bankers

HSBC plc	CAF Bank Ltd	Skipton Building Society
21 High Street	25 Kings Hill Avenue	The Bailey
Storrington	Kings Hill	Skipton
West Sussex	West Malling	North Yorkshire
RH20 4DR	Kent ME19 4JG	BD23 1AP

TRUSTEES' Report

The Trustees present their Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024.

These have been prepared in accordance with the Statutory requirements and Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Charities Act 2011.

The Charity was established on 12th March 1972 and registered with the Charity Commission on 29th June 1977. The governing constitution and rules were last amended in April 2021 after agreement of the AGM. The objects of the Charity are:

- To collect, publish, co-ordinate and make accessible in the interests of genealogy any documents or records particularly relating to the County of Sussex.
- To promote the preservation of such documents and records.
- To encourage the study of genealogy.
- To assist, educationally by lectures and otherwise, in record research.

To help achieve the objectives of the Charity we have four meeting centres across both counties that hold regular monthly meetings with speakers who give talks on many aspects of genealogy. We publish a quarterly magazine that is either sent to members or is available via our website. Our research room at The Keep is open to members & the public on Tuesday – Friday. We have established a monthly programme of Web Talks via Zoom that is available to all our members worldwide.

Trustees

The Trustees of the Charity are set out below. All Trustees are appointed at the AGM. The Trustees have met on five occasions during the year (all via Zoom) with a high attendance.

Michael J Henry
David J Wicks
Michael J Izzard

Terence F Mitchell
Mrs V Willis
Mrs Kathleen Allen

Mrs Jean Spilsted
Brian Eaton
Mrs Jean Donaldson

Where there is a requirement for new Trustees, they are identified and appointed by the existing Trustees. This was not necessary in this year.

The Trustees will undertake to give new Trustees an adequate induction to the responsibilities of Trustees, and the work, governing documents and procedures of the Sussex Family History Group.

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the Annual report and financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Accounting Rules.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity. Finance is a standing agenda item on the quarterly meeting of the Trustees.

The Trustees ensure that we provide the Independent Examiner with all the necessary information regarding the Charity and its assets.

Public benefit statement

The Trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on Public benefit when setting the objects of the Charity. See above for details on how the Charity's activities provide public benefit.

Sub-committees

Much of the co-ordination of the activities of the Charity is undertaken through the following sub-committees, the minutes and reports of which are considered regularly by the Trustees.

Membership
Projects

Library
Publication and Sales

Meetings and Conferences

The sub-committees generally meet via Zoom.

General data protection regulation (GDPR)

The Charity has a Trustee who has experience in this area and provides a report at each of the quarterly meetings. The report covers possible changes to the law and provides advice on ensuring that the Charity meets its obligations.

Risk Management

The two principal risks faced by the Charity relate to the control of our finances and to the Health and Safety and Safeguarding of all our volunteers who give their time to the Charity. These risks are reviewed at the quarterly meetings of the Trustees.

Review of the Year 2024

The year has seen major progress with our data archive and now it has over 3.6 million records. This enables members to research their families records online with most of the data being transcribed by members with local knowledge. We have called it **Sussex Discovery** and we are hoping it will attract more members to join and more importantly, to continue their membership with us as we add new material to the pages.

Members have provided feedback on the system during the year that has resulted in changes being made to improve the experience of the users. Having listened to the comments, further development will be undertaken in 2025 to further enhance the system.

The 200-year-old farming diary that we transcribed was published by the Sussex Record Society (SRS) in November. "The Oxley Farm Diaries" were volume 104 in the regular SRS series of publications.

It has a wealth of local information, and we managed to arrange a discount price for members to purchase the book. After the printed copies are all sold the work will become available electronically and we plan to publish an additional title "The Oxley Extra" electronically with more family information within.

We have now negotiated a new 5-year lease for our room at The Keep.

We had a very successful "Symposium" this year at The Keep. The event is free and is offered to all our volunteers as a thank you, with a superb lunch, all rounded off with a talk.

The annual conference was held at Sussex University due to the refurbishment of the Adastral Hall in Hassocks which we will return to next year at a much lower cost.

The Newsletter (Surely) is coming out in between the quarterly journal to catch up and for urgent notices.

We are still thinking about the future and ways to incorporate the roller coaster speed of change that is happening to our wonderful hobby.

Reserves

The year has seen a deficit of £1,268 compared to a deficit of £8,221 in 2023. The total funds held by the Charity at year end was £243,012 with the majority being held in banks.

The funds are held in the following banks.

HSBC Current Account	£157,334	CAF Current Account	£ 574
CAF Gold Account	£ 3,535	Skipton Building Society	£ 80,000

No part of these funds are currently designated or restricted. The policy of the Trustees is to hold funds more than one year's expenditure.

The current climate for Charities such as ours is difficult with the impacts of large companies such as Ancestry, Find My Past etc. These companies are changing the way people undertake their research into their family's history.

We need to find a way of providing a service that will attract new members and keep the existing ones. The Trustees may need to invest money to achieve the ambition of building a Group that will still be around to celebrate its 75th anniversary.

We are all aware that the County Archives continue to struggle with the financial pressures of the Councils. Our lease for The Keep is only five years and the Trustees will need to prepare a contingency plan should the lease not be renewed and designate the funds as necessary.

2025

With membership continuing to fall we will look at ways to raise the profile of the SFHG with a review of advertising the benefits of becoming a member. Part of this will be to add records to our data archive that are not generally available online.

In addition, it may be necessary to work together with other Family History Groups or Societies?

Approval

This report was approved by the Trustees at a meeting held on 4th April 2025 and signed on their behalf.

M J Henry Hon. Chairman and Trustees



INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Sussex Family History Group

I report on the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2024, which comprise the statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and the related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

It is my responsibility to examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act, follow the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act, and state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

(1) In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which give me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Report) Regulation 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of independent examination.

(2) I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Chaweevan Williams FCCA
Verdant Accountants Limited
Chartered Certified Accountants
20-22 Wenlock Road,
London N1 7GU

Date: 01 May 2025

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31st December 2024



		2024 Unrestricted Funds £	2023 Unrestricted Funds £
Income	Notes		
Donations & Legacies	2	38,971	46,046
Charitable activities	3	7,102	7,867
Investments	4	2,248	3,149
Other Income		187	293
Total Income		48,508	57,355
Expenditure			
Charitable activities	5	49,776	65,576
Total Expenditure		49,776	65,576
Net Income / (Expenditure)		(1,268)	(8,221)
Gain /(Loss) on Investment assets			0
Gross Transfers between funds			0
Total funds brought forward at 1 st January 2024		244,280	252,501
Total funds carried forward at 31 st December 2024		243,012	244,280

All income and expenditure derived from continuing activities.

The Charity has no recognised gains or losses for the year other than the results above.

Sussex Family History Group

Balance Sheet

For the year ended 31st December 2024



	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
Fixed Assets	9				
Tangible Assets			0		0
Current Assets					
Stocks		1,485		1,485	
Debtors	10	6,244		13,542	
Cash at Bank and in hand		241,554		258,874	
		249,283		273,901	
Creditors; amounts falling due within one year	11	(6,272)		(29,621)	
Net current assets		243,012		244,280	
Net assets		243,012		244,280	
Funds					
Unrestricted fund		243,012		244,280	
Total Charity funds		243,012		244,280	

These accounts were approved by the Board and authorised for issue on 4th April 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Michael J Henry (Hon. Chairman)

Michael J Izzard (Treasurer)



Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31st December 2024

1. Accounting policies

A. Accounting convention

Sussex Family History Group is a registered charity in England. The address of the charity is given in the charity information on Page 1 of these statements.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. 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 Standards applicable in the UK (FRS 102) issued in October 2019, the Charities Act 2011 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Standards.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under historical cost convention. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the Charity and rounded to the nearest £.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

B Going concern

The Trustees consider that the Charity will be able to settle outstanding invoices, bills and commitments as they fall due.

C Fund accounting policy

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the Trustees' discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

D 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 the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donations are recognised when the charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. Legacy gifts are recognised on a case-by-case basis following the granting of probate when the administrator / executor for the estate has communicated in writing both the amount and settlement date.

Income from tax reclaims are included in the Statement of Financial Activities at the same time as the gift to which they relate.



Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31st December 2024

D Income (continued)

Membership subscriptions have been traditionally recognised over the period to which they relate. Subscriptions are nonrefundable and therefore for 2024 the income from subscriptions has been recognised in the period in which the payment is received.

Income from charitable activities includes income recognised as earned (as the related goods or services are provided) under contract.

Income from investments is recognised when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity.

Deferred income represents amounts received for future periods and is released to incoming resources in the period for which it has been received.

E Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounting for on an accrual's basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

Grants payable are payments made to third parties in the furtherance of the charities objectives. Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the recipient of the grant has provided the specific service or output. Grants payable without performance conditions are only recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when a commitment has been made and there are no conditions to be met relating to the grant which remain in the control of the Charity. Provisions for grants are made when the intention to make a grant has been communicated to the recipient but there is uncertainty about either the timing of the grant or the amount of grant payable.

F Support and governance costs

Support costs are governance costs. Governance costs include costs of the preparation and examination of the statutory accounts, the costs of trustees' meetings and any legal advice to trustees on governance or constitutional matters. All support costs are allocated to charitable activities.

G Donated services

In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102), general volunteer time is not recognised. The Charity relies on voluntary help and has no paid staff. Volunteers open the library and assist members with their research and handle other enquiries as well as organising and running other events.

H Taxation

The charity is eligible for exemption from taxation in respect of its income and gains.



Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31st December 2024

I Library and The Keep

Expenditure is charged as an expense in the Statement of Financial Activity in the year of purchase.

J Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Leasehold property	Over the life of the lease
Equipment	3 to 5 years straight line

Assets costing less than £250 are not capitalised but instead are charged as an expense on the Statement of Financial Activities.

K Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after due regard for obsolete and slow-moving stocks

The Trustees have decided that with effect from 1st January 2025 the charity will move from Accrual Accounts to Receipts and Payments Accounts.

This is possible as the charity is within the rules set out by the Charity Commission and it meets the conditions that permit the change.

The charity no longer has assets.

- The main asset in the past was the lease for the room at The Keep. The lease for 10 years was paid up front. The new five years lease is paid quarterly.
- The computing assets have been fully written off and the Trustees will only agree to future expenditure if the charity can afford the expenditure.
- The stock of CD etc for sales will need to be written off. The current sales levels have decreased and those that now being brought are generally provided by download.

The charity has not and cannot foresee non-cash donations and our investments are in bank accounts.

The main source of income has been and will remain the income from subscriptions, donations from members plus a small amount from the sales & downloads of records. Therefore, our income is well below the £250,000 limit for Receipts and Payment Accounting and is not trading as a company.



Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31st December 2024

Note no.		2024 Unrestricted Funds £	2023 Unrestricted Funds £
2	Donations and legacies		
	Donations and legacies	40	35
	Gift Aid reclaimed tax	1,446	2,079
	Assets donated to SFHG from HRFHS	470	
	Subscriptions	37,015	43,932
3	Charitable Activities		
	Publication sales	3,667	3,771
	Conference, trips & FMP Royalties	4,435	4,096
4	Investments	2,248	3,149
5	Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities		
	Grants payable	2,200	1,621
	Donations to societies	4,644	0
	Meeting Centres	4,955	4,467
	Insurance	716	710
	The Keep	4,000	8,222
	The Keep contribution of 0.84% of running cost	8	2,091
	Group computers and Internet	4,904	4,859
	Magazine – Sussex Family Historian	14,150	14,413
	Publication costs	459	507
	FHF Costs & Society Subscriptions	1,067	2,042
	Publicity	329	132
	Conference and trips	6,745	8,574
	Merchandise	457	0
	Bank Charges	3,637	1,253
	Depreciation of leasehold property		2,348
	Depreciation of equipment		554
	Printing, stationery, postage and mileage	2,161	1,270
	Support costs	3,945	4,720
	Innershed – Sussex Discovery	4,800	7,793
	Release of Accruals from previous years	(9,402)	
	TOTAL	49,776	65,576



Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31st December 2024

Note No.		2024 Unrestricted Funds £	2023 Unrestricted Funds £
6	<i>Not required</i>		
7	Support Costs		
	Governance	3,945	4,720
8	Employees, trustees' remuneration & expenses		
	The charity had no employees during the year.		
	No remuneration was paid to trustees during the last two years.		
9	Tangible fixed assets had all been fully depreciated in in 2023		
10	Debtors		
	Other debtors	5,000	11,529
	Prepayments	1,244	2,013
		6,244	13,542
11	Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		
	Accruals and deferred income		
	Balance held 1 st January 2024	29,621	29,621
	Released in 2024	29,621	
	Value held 31 st December 2024	6,272	
	TOTAL	6,272	29,621
12	Related parties		
	- Controlling entity - The charity is controlled by the Trustees		
	- Related party transactions – There were none during the year		