

# **Dorset Family History Society**

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

### **From 1<sup>st</sup> Oct 1922 to 31 Sept 2023**

**Charity Name: Dorset Family History Society.**

**Registered charity number: 801504**

**Principle/Registered office: Stanley House, 3 Fleets Lane, Poole,  
DORSET, BH5 3AJ**

**Names of Charity Trustees during the period:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Office (if any)</b>	<b>Dates appointed</b>
Mervyn Roy Goddard	Chair	17 Nov 2020
Sheila Long	Committee	15 Nov 2022
Angela Mary Parker-Harris	Committee	15 Nov 2022
Linda Adams	Committee	15 Nov 2022
Shirley Anne Robinson	Committee	15 Nov 2022
Sheila Tanner	Committee	15 Nov 2022
Lorraine Squires	Secretary	17 Nov 2020
Cherry Diane Fisher	Committee	30 June 2019
Debbie Winter	Committee	09 Nov 2015
Christine Margaret Chuck	Treasurer	09 Nov 2015
June Margaret Taylor	Committee	10 Nov 2014
Richard Roy Yates	Committee	05 March 2012

**Bankers:**

NatWest Bank, The Square, 5 Old Christchurch Rd, Bournemouth, BH1 1DU  
COIF Charities Deposit Fund, CCLA Investment Management, PO Box 12892,  
Dunmow, Essex, CM6 9DL

**Type of governing document:**

Constitution

**How the charity is constituted:**

Unincorporated Association

**Trustee selection methods:**

Election by membership at AGM

**Additional governance issues:**

Society managed by bi-monthly full committee meetings plus annual AGM

**Objects of the charity:**

To promote and encourage the public study of family history, genealogy, heraldry and local history with particular reference to the County of Dorset, and to promote the preservation, security and accessibility of archival material.

**Summary of the main achievements and benefits during the year:**

Although we are now two years after lockdown and all the other constraints of the pandemic, the society has this year had to deal with both the residual fall out from these events coupled with the current financial crisis. With this as the background the DFHS, in common with many of our fellow Family History societies, in planning its activities for the year has kept in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit whilst working out and delivering a programme of events and activities that a post pandemic and possible budget constrained membership might be looking for.

Current membership is around 510 with a growing percentage of this being located either overseas or at a substantial distance from the county and this is also a change we need to be sure to consider in all our future planning.

Knowing that socialising is an important part of events for our local members, we have restarted "live" monthly talks at St Georges Hall but have interspersed these with Zoom talks which enable us to both better reach our more geographically distant members and also to hear from speakers for whom the trip to Poole would be difficult or potentially costly.

For our monthly computer club, we have been solely using the online approach as, by definition, the content fits and attendees tend to be comfortable with this approach.

For both of these regular offerings however we have started to seek feedback on other approaches which we can incorporate into our plans for next year.

For our Family History Day in April 2023, we made a conscious decision to keep the event small and at the same venue, St Georges Hall. Once again it was a great success with positive feedback from exhibitors and visitors. Footfall was up 32% on the 2022 event. We welcomed some new and returning exhibitors who had not attend in 2022 and several have asked to receive invitations for the 2024 event. Planning for this has already started.

Pre pandemic the society would attend quite a number of such fairs run either by our sister societies or by the Family History Federation but, again due in large part to the current financial situation, a combination of a significant reduction in attendance levels and the rise in the cost of putting on such events, has led to a move away from live to online and the society has been learning how to adapt to this "new world"

This does not mean that we are not actively looking for live events that we can be part of but we have focused on smaller venues and local events such as libraries, craft shows and similar in the BPC area. As always, we are actively looking for more

volunteers, particularly those of you with a good working knowledge of society records and systems, to help with these events.

We have also re-instated our “First Steps in Family History” courses at Treetops and restarted coach trips to the National Archives and similar establishments that we hope will be of interest to our membership.

Our volunteers have continued to work hard over the last 12 months, balancing their commitment to the Society with personal demands, to provide the membership with support and knowledge, helping family historians progress their research and facilitating the running of the Society. Collectively the level of knowledge within the Society is incredible but like any organisation we need to look to the future and attract new volunteers. Attempts to attract new volunteers from the membership pool have however proven difficult. Though we do feel that there are many members with an excellent (and some specialist) knowledge who would make excellent volunteers at Treetops or to assist with research requests we need to find ways to harness this expertise and we continue to explore this area.

In doing this we have recognised that some of the skills we need to thrive are not just those of family history, but in the areas of social media, website design and document management, for example. This year, DFHS became members of Community Action Network (CAN), a local organisation who specialise in supporting and advising charities and voluntary organisations. Through their recruitment portal we have 'recruited' volunteers, who are working on short and longer term projects and tasks for the Society. CAN have also given us invaluable support and resources to assist with reviewing and updating our policies -which provide guidance to all volunteers so that we operate within required regulations and in a consistent manner.

In line with many other Family History Societies across the UK, DFHS is increasing its presence using social media with one of our appointments managing X {Twitter} on our behalf, and we are increasing the amount of content published on Facebook. We want to grasp the opportunities social media will give us, but we fully intend to continue with all current communication channels.

One of our future plans is to review our website, and we hope one of our new volunteers will be able to help us with that.

In terms of finances. the Society received a bequest during the year from a former member of £35714 which has resulted in a surplus of receipts for the year of £27224. The Society has been recording a small deficit of approximately £2000 per annum for the last few years - without the bequest, the deficit for 2022 -23 would have been £8500 which is obviously unsustainable in the longer term.

As the Society holds funds totalling £95000 it is obviously not an immediate issue, but major differences from the previous year are firstly that payments in 2022-23 were some £4000 more than the previous year. The main reasons for this were that the costs of running Treetops have increased by approx. £1000 (and it should be noted that the new lease will add nearly a further £1000 in 2023-24 and that the cost of producing and distributing the Journal has nearly doubled. The latter however is less alarming than it sounds, as due to payment dates at the year end, 2022-23 includes

the costs of 5 Journals while the previous year only included 3. The actual cost per issue only increased by £130.

Receipts in 2022-23 (excluding the bequest) reduced by nearly £2500 principally in subscription income. Only time will tell if this is a sign of a significant drop in membership, or that additional reminders to renew are required.

### **Policy on reserves**

Although no monies are kept specifically as a reserve a percentage of our funds are kept with COIF, the Charities Deposit Fund in order to give a better return than that offered by our day to day operational account.

### **Declaration:**

**The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees report above on 21st November 2023.**

**Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:**

**Signatures: R.R Yates**

**Full names: Richard Roy Yates**

**Position: Trustee**

**Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023**

DORSET FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY  
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023

	2022 - 2023		2021 - 2022	
RECEIPTS	£	£	£	£
Subscriptions				
2022 - 2023	4975		2021 - 2022	5552
2023 - 2024	<u>1375</u>		2022 - 2023	<u>2921</u>
		6350		8473
Open Day		727		874
Meetings		797		892
Coach Trips		382		494
Sales		1414		1654
Advertising		0		0
Research		6140		5570
Donations / Fundraising		36014		412
Gift Aid		1132		1142
Education		144		75
Sundries		17		161
Interest		250		256
		<u>53366</u>		<u>20003</u>
PAYMENTS				
Treetops				
Administration	6379		Administration	4034
Rents	<u>11194</u>		Rents	<u>12499</u>
		17573		16533
Meetings		996		663
Coach Trips		753		585
Sales/Fairs		1091		810
Journal		4820		2512
Open Day		389		454
Travel expenses		77		263
Education		185		0
Sundries Misc	102		Misc	10
Equipment	5		Equipment	0
Bank Charges	<u>151</u>		Bank Charges	<u>183</u>
		257		193
		<u>26142</u>		<u>22013</u>
Surplus/Deficit for the year		27224		-2010
Bank balances brought forward		67885		69895
Bank balances				
Current account	35357		Current accour	9231
PayPal	2740		PayPal	1893
COIF Deposit account	<u>57011</u>		COIF Deposit £	<u>56761</u>
Carried forward		<u>95109</u>		<u>67885</u>
ASSETS - As valued by the Committee				
Stock of Publications at cost		3998		4029
Computers, fiche readers, etc		8		23
Furniture, Banners, etc		1015		1443
Library		1079		1439
Stationery		<u>191</u>		<u>255</u>
		<u>6290</u>		<u>7188</u>

No Restricted funds, being funds which may only be spent on the specific purpose for which they were received, have been received or spent during the year.

The Society holds a lease on the property at Suite 5, (known as Treetops Research Centre) Stanley House, 3 Fleets Lane, Poole, BH15 3AJ at an annual cost of £11478 exclusive of VAT on the Service Charge for a three year period starting on 12th August 2023. Service charges do not increase throughout the term.

We have prepared the financial statement for the year ended 30th September 2023

Joy Dixon      Treasurer

APPROVED BY THE Annual General Meeting held on      21st November 2023  
and signed on its behalf by

David Gynes      President

I have examined the books and records of the Society and confirm that the above Account has been prepared in accordance therewith

Chairman of the meeting  
Peter Stickland

Date: 21st November      2023

## **Dorset Family History Society**

### **Report of Independent Examiner**