

THE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY OF CHESHIRE

REGULATIONS FOR THE RUNNING OF GROUPS

Preamble

Since each Group is a part of the Society as a whole, it must conduct its affairs in such a way that it does not adversely affect either the Society generally or any other Group of the Society.

GROUP REGULATIONS

- 1.** Each Group must run its own affairs in such a way that it does not in any way compromise the Charitable status of the Society, and must comply with the Society's Constitution and these Regulations. It must also follow guidelines issued from time to time by the Society Committee on behalf of Society Officers and other Society Officials who are charged with looking after specific aspects of the Society's business. But it shall otherwise be able in general to organise its own affairs in its own way, as the members of the Group shall decide.
- 2.** Every Group shall be run by a Committee, which shall meet at least once a year in addition to any meeting that it may have upon the occasion of its Annual General Meeting. Each Group shall elect the members of the Group Committee at its Annual General Meeting. The size of the Committee shall be at the discretion of the Group but the minimum number of members should be one, plus the Group Leader and Group Hon. Treasurer. A Committee may co-opt additional members during the year.
- 3.** The members of a geographically-based Group shall be those who are so registered with the Society Membership Secretary. All Society Members shall be entitled to join in the activities of functionally-based Groups (such as the Computer Group), to vote at their meetings and to act as officials of such Groups, notwithstanding any other Group membership they may have. All Society Members shall be entitled to attend the meetings of any Group. It shall be for individual Groups to decide whether Members of other Groups receive hospitality as members or as visitors.
- 4.** (a) A Group General Meeting may be convened by providing notice of the meeting, and of the business to be conducted, at a previous scheduled meeting of the Group.

- (b) Each Group shall hold each year its own Annual General Meeting of its members, which shall be held within the three months following the end of the Society's financial year.
- (c) The business conducted at the AGM shall include the following:
 - i) The election of a Group Leader and Group Hon. Treasurer, who must be separate people, and one or more other committee members.
 - ii) To approve the Group's annual Statement of Accounts which shall be made up to 30 June each year, and which shall be independently examined. Independent in this particular context shall mean independent from the Group being examined.
- (d) A copy of the Minutes of each Group's Annual General Meeting shall be sent to the Society's Hon. Secretary within 4 weeks of it taking place, and a copy of each Group's Statement of Accounts, duly independently examined, shall be sent to the Society Hon. Treasurer no later than 6 weeks after the year end. The form of accounts shall follow any pattern laid down by the Society Committee, or be otherwise acceptable to the Society Hon. Treasurer.

5. Each Group shall have a Bank or Building Society account held in the name of either:

- a) The Family History Society of Cheshire, Group;
- or
- b) The Group of the Family History Society of Cheshire.

Each Group account shall have not less than three cheque signatories. All cheque payments must be made on the authority of two appointed cheque signatories (who must not be related e.g. husband and wife). A cheque signatory shall not sign a cheque for his own expenses.

Any expenditure over £30 must have the prior approval of two Group committee members, at least one of which will be the Group Leader or Group Hon. Treasurer.

Recommendation: That, wherever practicable, proposed Group expenditure of significance is discussed with members at the Group's routine meetings so as to establish an informal consensus on spending plans.

Recommendation: It should be noted that the Society Committee has the power to make available funds to individual Groups over and above the Capitation Grant (if any), and Groups are encouraged to develop their services to members with this in mind. Accordingly, it is recommended that Groups discuss proposed expenditure of Society funds with the Society Hon. Treasurer as early as practicable so as to ensure that approval for funds may be given at the appropriate time without delay.

- 6.** Any money paid by a donor to a Group for a particular purpose must be used for that purpose, unless:

 - (a) a majority of members of the Group have voted at a General Meeting that it should be used in some other way;

and
 - (b) provided that the permission of the donor has been obtained, unless obtaining such permission is wholly impracticable, in which case an alternative use that reflects as near as may be the original wishes of the donor may be substituted.
- 7.** Groups may ask for donations from their Group members for their use of the Society's microfiche. No Group must hold up microfiche circulation in such a way that the following Group on the rota is inconvenienced. The Groups are responsible for passing on and collecting microfiche on or close to the dates shown on the rota in the Society's magazine, but the actual date and method of transfer is left to the parties concerned to decide.
- 8.** All Project work carried out by members on behalf of the Society or any part of the Society shall belong to the Society. The Society Project Co-ordinator should be informed of all projects that are being undertaken and those that are being proposed. Project work shall normally be funded by the Society and the results shall be for the benefit of the Society. Any project work carried out must be made available to all members of the Society and a copy deposited with the Society's Librarian. Commercial exploitation of project work will be for the benefit of the Society.

Recommended: that proposed project work is drawn to the attention of the Society Project Co-ordinator at an early stage to avoid duplication of effort, and that funding arrangements are discussed informally with the Society Treasurer at an early stage also.
- 9.** All Groups shall maintain an inventory of their assets and shall indicate on that list those items that have been loaned or donated to the Group. (Name of lender or donor to be noted also). All Groups are reminded that all assets are the property of the Society unless the lender or donor has specifically stated otherwise. To avoid possible problems or misunderstandings, all Groups shall use the form provided by the Society Treasurer.
- 10.** The Group Leader of each Group, who is by virtue of that office a Society Committee member and a Trustee of the Society, is expected, in the interests of the Group, to attend the Society's Committee Meetings. A proxy, with speaking and voting rights, may be nominated by the Group Leader to attend instead. Any other Society member is invited to attend Society Committee Meetings as an observer, but without speaking or voting rights.

Note: The Society Committee Meeting Chairman will normally permit observers to address the meeting briefly so as to assist the Committee in respect of a specific matter.

- 11.** The following procedure shall apply in the event of an intention to Dissolve or Cease a Group of the Society.
- (a) The decision to implement the Dissolution procedure (as given below) must be taken either by a majority of the members of the Group present at a meeting convened in accordance with the meeting procedure described in 4(a) above, or by the Society Committee.
 - (b) A Notice of a Meeting proposing a Resolution to Dissolve the Group must be sent to all members of that Group, as listed by the Membership Secretary at the date of the Notice, and to the Society Chairman, Society Hon. Secretary and Society Hon. Treasurer, at least 21 days prior to the proposed Meeting. The Notice shall include facilities to make a postal or proxy vote. All members of the Group voting by post must be given the opportunity to vote “Yes” or “No” to a specific motion for Dissolution.
 - (c) It is a pre-condition for a valid meeting at which a Resolution to Dissolve is proposed that 11(a) and 11(b) have been complied with.
 - (d) The Quorum for the Meeting shall be actual attendance of 50% of the total Group Membership as defined in Clause 11(b), to include proxies.
 - (e) The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer of the Society are entitled to attend the Meeting and address it.
 - (f) Only Group members (as defined in 3. above) shall be entitled to vote. A valid vote for Dissolution shall include proxy and postal votes, and shall require a number equal or greater than 75% of those Group members actually present (including proxies) at the Meeting.
 - (g) Only one vote per Group Member is permitted. In respect of Family Membership, each member of the family has a vote.
 - (h) The counting of votes is to be scrutinised by the Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer of the Society, or other Official of the Society nominated by the Chairman. The scrutinising shall not be undertaken by a member of the Group holding the vote.

Recommendation: A secret ballot is advised, but is not an essential part of this Procedure.
 - (j) All money held at the time of the passing of the Resolution to Dissolve, whether at the Bank or “in hand”, must be passed to the Treasurer of the Society forthwith. Accounts must be provided without delay, made up to the date of the Dissolution and Independently Examined.

- (k) All items on loan must be returned forthwith to the lender upon Dissolution.
- (l) All assets of the Group must be handed over to the Society forthwith upon Dissolution.

Note: Assets of a Group shall be understood to refer to:

- (i) All items purchased by the Group with Group funds.
- (ii) All items donated to the Group, unless the donor has specifically indicated otherwise.

12. The following procedure shall apply in the event of the Society Committee suspending a Group in accordance with the Society's Constitution:

- (a) Where the Society Committee have suspended a Group, and its monies and assets frozen in consequence, the Society Treasurer shall have the power to take control of the financial affairs of the Group, on behalf of that Group, and the Group committee is to facilitate the transfer of control without delay. This power shall continue until the Group has been either wound up following dissolution or full control has been handed back by the Society Committee to the Group.
- (b) A Notice of a Meeting proposing a Resolution to Dissolve or to discuss proposals for other action in respect of the Group (or both) must be sent to all members of that Group as listed by the Membership Secretary at the date of the Notice. This Notice must be sent to all such Members at least 21 days prior to the proposed Meeting.
- (c) A valid vote for action short of Dissolution shall require a simple majority of those attending the Meeting, including proxy and postal votes, who are Society Committee Members, or members of the suspended Group, or both.

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Each Group shall be encouraged to run a bookstall, with someone to organise it. They should account for any money taken from the sale of books to the Group's Treasurer, though it is for the Group to decide if a float is necessary.
2. Each Group should keep a register of people attending each of its monthly meetings, so that the amount taken at the door can be checked by the Group's Treasurer.
3. Each Group should be able to decide how many meetings a non-member of the Society may attend before being requested to join. Non-members should not be allowed access to items reserved specifically for members of the Society (e.g. library books, microfiche and electronic media).

Adopted by the Society Committee 23 July 2000

GpRegs.doc