



NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY



DNA PROJECT

In 2014 Dr Maurice Gleeson, an expert in Irish genetic genealogy, gave a well attended talk to the Ballymena Branch of the Society on DNA tests for genealogical purposes. Dr Gleeson then arranged for the Society to have its own DNA project with Family Tree DNA [FTDNA], a leading company providing such tests. Any Associate or Branch Member of the Society can join this DNA project and get special discounted rates for the DNA tests. Those who are not members of the Society but who have family from the North of Ireland may also join the project but they pay the usual prices for the tests.

If you are a Member of the Society and wish to take up this offer, please contact one of the Ballymena committee officers co-ordinating this programme: either **Maggie Lyttle** at MaggieLyttle@hotmail.com or **Alan Rosborough** at RosboroughASD@dsl.pipex.com or **Bonny Cook** at CookDNA@earthlink.net. E-mail your NIFHS membership number and, once your current membership has been checked, you will be provided with a special code to enable you to apply for the discount.

You then order the test via the NIFHS project at <https://www.familytreedna.com/public/nifhs>. Just click on JOIN REQUEST in the dark blue bar at the top and go for Option B to buy a test and join the project - or Option A if you have already taken a test and have your username and password.

There are three different types of test available:

- **Y-DNA** for paternity: This tests markers on the Y chromosome passed down from father to son. You can opt for 37 markers to be tested or 67 or 111 – the more the better. Over many generations the values of these markers record slight mutations; thus the closer two men's results are, the closer in generations will be their most recent common ancestor (MRCA) in their male lines: a perfect 37/37 marker test match gives a 95% likelihood of the MRCA being within 8 generations while a 111/111 marker match gives the same 95% likelihood of the MRCA being within only 5 generations back.
- **mtDNA** for maternity: This tests the mitochondrial DNA passed down from mother to child and so is useful for gaining a better understanding of your maternal ancestry.
- **FamilyFinder** for cousins: This is an autosomal DNA test that identifies your relatives within 5 generations by comparing your chromosomes with those of others in a massive database. About half your DNA comes from each parent, thus about a quarter comes from each grandparent, an eighth from each great grandparent and so on. So other descendants of your ancestors will share some of your DNA and the fraction shared indicates the degree of cousinhood.

A DNA test kit includes two cotton swabs with which you scrape the inside of your cheek. Your kit also includes instructions for collecting your DNA sample and the all important Release Form, which is your written consent that allows FTDNA to share your name and email address with someone who matches your genetic fingerprint exactly. Return your sample kit in the self-addressed envelope provided. Even if your test gives rise to few close matches, or perhaps none, further matches may well arise in the future as more people take these tests.