



THE NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Branch Handbook

2020~2021

Updated - 11th September 2020

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THE SOCIETY

GOVERNANCE

The Society is registered with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, number NIC106071, and since 1990 it has had registered charitable status with HMRC, number XR22524, with the consequent financial advantages of exemption from rates and entitlement to reclaim Gift Aid.

The governing document of the Society consists of two parts: the **Society Constitution** and the **Branch Constitution**, which are on the website and to which all Branches must adhere.

[The main legal guideline for the Society and Branches is that they act in accordance with the Charities Acts \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 & 2013, the Society Constitution and the Branch Constitution.](#)

OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY

To promote and encourage the public and personal study of world-wide family history, genealogy, heraldry and local history with particular reference to the North of Ireland.

In furtherance of the above Objects the Society shall have the following aims:

- (a) to hold lectures and discussions and to organise research visits for Society members and members of the public;
- (b) to receive, hold and maintain a library of printed works and other materials for use by Society members and members of the public;
- (c) to receive, preserve, transcribe or publish source materials, including documents and monumental inscriptions, such materials to remain the property of the Society except where otherwise agreed in writing;
- (d) to work in conjunction with similar societies and supportive bodies such as churches, libraries, record offices and educational establishments;
- (e) to publish the Journal "*North Irish Roots*".

The income and property of the Society shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the Objects.

ORGANISATION OF THE SOCIETY

The Society is a voluntary, non profit making organisation, depending on the financial support of amateurs interested in Family History and volunteer effort in running the Society. The Society is not a Research Agency, although we like to put people in contact with one another. The Society is a member of the following organisations: The Federation of Family History Societies [FFHS], The Federation for Ulster Local Studies [FULS] and The Council for Irish Genealogical Organisations [CIGO].

The Society had its beginnings in a family history group formed in Bangor in 1979 following a series of talks by Kathleen Neill. It was chaired by Aiken McClelland (the Librarian/Archivist at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum who died in 1981) and then by Brendan Adams (a dialectologist at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum who died in 1982) and then by David Honneyman (a lecturer at Stranmillis College).

Over the years, as the interest in genealogy has grown, the group has expanded by creating a number of Branches in the North of Ireland to form the Society, which now has over a thousand members here and overseas; at present the Branches are:

**Ballymena | Belfast | Causeway Coast & Glens (based in Coleraine) |
Foyle (based in 'Derry) | Killyleagh | Larne | Lisburn | Newtownabbey | North Armagh |
South Tyrone (based near Dungannon) | Tyrone (based in Omagh)**

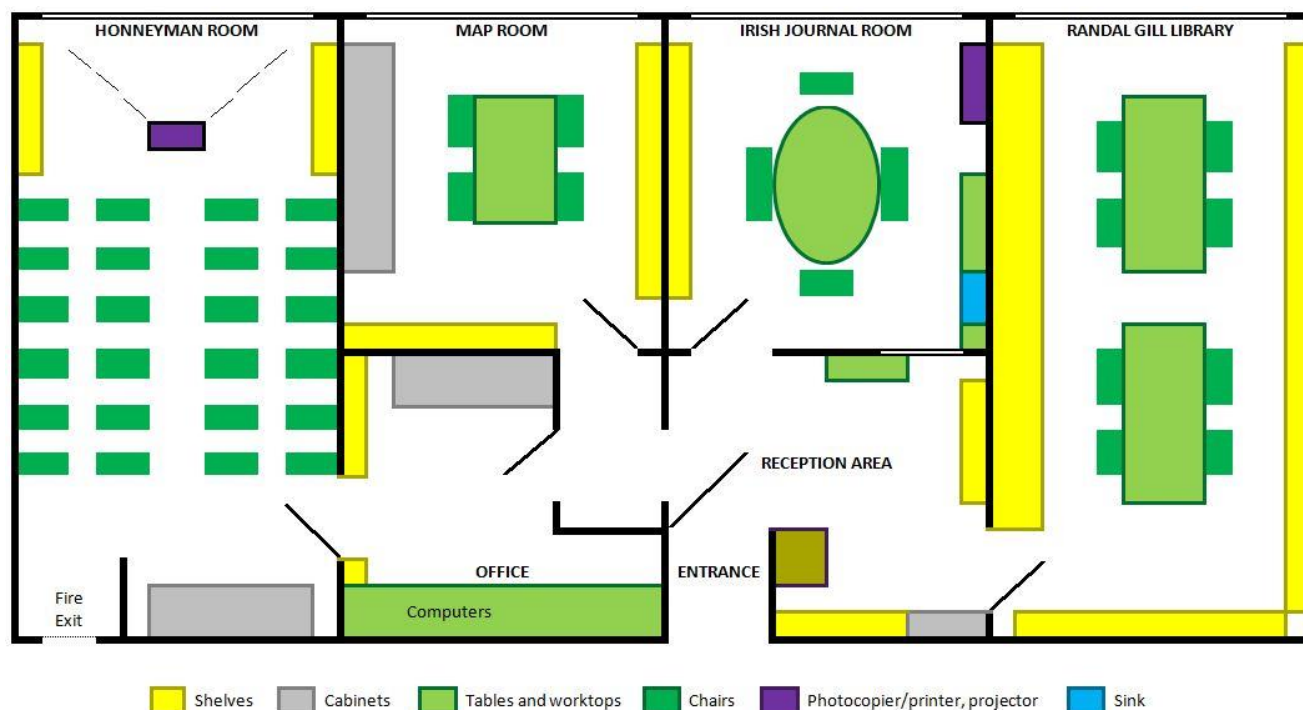
The Society is governed by the Council, with an elected President and other Officers together with the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer of each Branch. The members of Council are the Trustees of the charity. Many members have worked hard to develop the Society under the leadership of a succession of dedicated Presidents: Dr David Honneyman [1982-1983 & 1992-1994], the late Mr Randal Gill [1984-1992 & 2002-2012], the late Rev. Dr Hugh Hezlett [1983-1984], the late Mr Samuel Bracegirdle [1994-1997], Mr John Bassett [1997-2002] and Miss Rosemary Sibbett [2012-2016]. Miss Ann Robinson was elected President in 2016.

RESEARCH CENTRE

The Society's address is

**The North of Ireland Family History Society,
Unit C4, Valley Business Centre, 67 Church Road,
Newtownabbey, BT36 7LS, Northern Ireland, U.K.**

The premises consist of the Society's Office and Research Centre, which houses the Randal Gill Library (named after a former President and Librarian) as well as the Irish Journal Room, the Map Room and the Honneyman Room, which is used for courses and meetings. Details of the collection are on the website, www.NIFHS.org, which also has information about the Society's publications, courses and other events.



THE BRANCH

BRANCH COMMITTEE

Each Branch is run by an elected Committee consisting of a Chairperson, a Secretary, a Treasurer and, optionally, other Officers, and several Members.

The following notes are designed to help each Branch and the Officers and Members of its Committee to understand their rôles and responsibilities. The notes cover:

A separate document, the **Activity Handbook**, lists many suggestions of talks, visits and other activities to assist Branches in planning their programmes. The **Society Handbook** has information about the Society's Research Centre in Newtownabbey and the services available to Members including the publications, courses, interest groups, et cetera. The **Who's Who Handbook** lists the Trustees and the Society's Voluntary Assistants.

FORMING A NEW BRANCH

Anyone wishing to form a new Branch should first discuss the matter with the **Education & Development Officer** at Education@NIFHS.org. The Society is willing to assist by providing information and advice, helping with any preparatory meeting, for example by providing brochures, display stands and speakers, and helping with subsequent meetings by suggesting possible activities and speakers. However it is important that there are sufficient local people prepared to undertake the organisation of the Branch. A local library may provide a venue for at least a preparatory meeting and libraries and the local press are good places to advertise such a meeting. Council may also be able to suggest other people in the area who might be interested and it will be happy to arrange for a speaker to address the meeting and explain how the Society works and what it offers. This **Preparatory Meeting** enables the organisers to gauge the level of interest and the readiness of potential members to form a committee.

If these are sufficient, a date, time and venue for an **Inaugural General Meeting** should be decided. The opportunity can also be taken to discuss a suitable venue and date and time for subsequent meetings and to solicit suggestions for speakers and activities for those meetings.

At this Inaugural General Meeting, a **Committee** consisting of Officers (at least a Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer) and other Members should be elected, the **Branch Constitution** should be adopted (and a copy signed and sent to Council for ratification, along with the names and contact details of the Committee), membership subscriptions decided and membership sought. Council will be happy to suggest a speaker for the meeting. Thereafter it is up to the Committee to organise a programme of meetings; indeed, the organisers may already have done much of this following the preparatory meeting.

Once Council has ratified the Branch Constitution, the Branch will be part of the Society, as will its members once their membership forms and capitation fees have been forwarded to the Society's Membership Secretary. At present the **capitation fees** are £14 per member or £22 for two members living in the same household – covering the costs of journals, insurance, the Society's premises and the Society's expenses.

It is up to each Branch to set its annual **membership subscriptions**. In doing so, the Committee should consider the cost of the hire of the venue, the provision of refreshments, the honoraria and any expenses for speakers, the cost of publicity for the Branch and the need to build up some reserves (for example to purchase items such as a projector or to underwrite the publication of a book or events such as a summer outing or a Christmas dinner). As a guide, at present the annual subscriptions in the Belfast Branch are £24 per member or £32 for two members living in the same household, i.e. the capitation fee plus £10.

CHARITY TRUSTEESHIP & MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL

The Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer of each Branch are, *ex officio*, Trustees of the Society and Members of Council. As such, they are responsible for the governance of the Society through the monthly meetings of Council. Each trustee must sign a Trustee Declaration and be registered with the Charities Commission for Northern Ireland. Names of trustees appear in the Register of Charities which is available online as part of the Commission's website. The Society has an insurance policy to indemnify Trustees. The following notes will bring to the attention of those Officers their responsibilities.

These are chiefly to ensure the financial probity of the Society, to ensure that the income and property of the Society are applied solely towards the promotion of the Objects, to ensure that the Society provides a benefit to the general public, not just its Members, and to ensure that annual reports to the Charity Commission are properly made. They also include those Officers' responsibilities as Trustees should the Branch or the Society be wound up. The Branch's Committee Members are responsible for the governance of the Branch.

In addition the Officers (particularly the Treasurer) of each Branch should note that Clause 19 of the Act states that:

- (1) **The fact that a charity is registered [and its number, NIC 106071] shall be stated in legible characters—**
(a) in all notices, advertisements and other documents issued by or on behalf of the charity and soliciting money or other property for the benefit of the charity;
(b) in all bills of exchange, promissory notes, endorsements, cheques and orders for money or goods purporting to be signed on behalf of the charity; and
(c) in all bills rendered by it and in all its invoices, receipts and letters of credit.
- (2) Subsection (1)(a) has effect whether the solicitation is express or implied, and whether the money or other property is to be given for any consideration or not.
- (3) Any person who issues or authorises the issue of any document falling within paragraph (a) or (c) of subsection (1) which does not contain the statement required by that subsection, is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.
- (4) Any person who signs any document falling within paragraph (b) of subsection (1) which does not contain the statement required by that subsection, is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

***It would be wise to obtain – and use – a rubber stamp for use on such documents
if the charity number is not pre-printed.***

CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson takes overall responsibility for the efficient running of the Branch and chairs meetings of the Branch and its Committee.

The Chairperson is the main representative of the Branch. One aspect of this is speaking for the Branch at public events and also at Council meetings and generally representing the Branch's views and thereby influencing the activities and direction of the Society. The other aspect is to report back to the Branch the deliberations and decisions of Council.

The Members of the Branch have put their faith in the Chairperson and given him or her the authority to display leadership. By ensuring that the Branch fulfils its legal requirements, by representing the Branch effectively at Council meetings and elsewhere and by maintaining control of meetings you can demonstrate that the faith is not misplaced. Members respond to good leadership and are inspired to take a more active part. The other way that you can display leadership is by taking a lead in developing the activities of the Branch, including recruitment of new members.

Of particular importance is the Annual General Meeting: clause 27 of the Branch Constitution states:

The Committee shall prepare in respect of each financial year an annual report on the activities of the Branch during that year.

and sub-clause (1) of clause 9 of the Branch Constitution states:

An annual general meeting shall be held each year during May. At this meeting the annual report and the statement of accounts for the financial year ending 31st March and the report of the auditor or independent examiner must be presented for adoption. Following the annual general meeting, the statement of accounts and the report of the independent examiner must be promptly sent to the Treasurer of the Society and the annual report must be promptly sent to the General Secretary of the Society in time for the Society's annual general meeting in September.

It hardly needs to be said that chairing Branch and Committee meetings should be effective. In order to be authoritative the following points should be borne in mind.

- You should be the focal point at the beginning of a meeting and should appear to be businesslike. Stand, rather than sit, at the front. In order to be heard, speak to the back wall of the room, not to your handheld notes - your voice tends to carry to the point at which you are looking - and not much further; some of your audience may be hard of hearing. Do your homework before the meeting and have a written list of items you wish to mention.
- If it is the Branch's monthly business meeting:
 - Welcome any visitors and the visiting speaker, if there is one.
 - Some, but not all, Branches keep minutes of business and social meetings, in which case apologies for absence are noted; the Secretary reads the minutes of the previous meeting if they have not previously been circulated, corrections are recorded; a proposer and a seconder are sought and the minutes are adopted and signed; matters arising are dealt with.
 - You and possibly the other Officers raise matters of interest.
 - The speaker is introduced and, following the talk, a vote of thanks is proposed and perhaps seconded.
 - With closing remarks, you bring the meeting to an end.
- If it is a Committee meeting:
 - Agree the agenda with the Secretary beforehand and have your proposals and suggestions ready. This helps to prevent the meeting degenerating into ineffectual rambling – You have the authority and responsibility to step in to call the meeting to order and bring the discussion back to the point that is being considered and to ensure that decisions are taken and actions assigned rather than leave matters and duties unresolved.
- If it is the Branch AGM:
 - With good preparation the AGM can be effected very quickly and without Members feeling they are being put under pressure to volunteer to join the Committee; consequently they will be more likely to attend.
 - Particularly when it looks as though there will be a vacancy on the Committee you will find it beneficial to sound out possible candidates in advance, especially if one of the Officers plans to stand down. Modesty or embarrassment often prevents Members volunteering at the meeting and they are more likely to agree if approached well beforehand.
 - Ask for resolutions and nominations for elections to be sent in beforehand so that they can appear on the agenda sent out to Members; ideally the annual report and audited accounts should be sent out in advance but this may not be possible until the day of the meeting.
 - Minutes of the meeting and a register of those attending must be kept. Apologies for absence are noted; the Secretary reads the minutes of the previous meeting (if not circulated), corrections are recorded; a proposer and a seconder are sought and the minutes adopted and signed; matters arising are dealt with.
 - Your annual report is read, proposed and seconded and adopted.
 - The audited accounts are briefly explained, proposed and seconded and adopted.
 - The Independent Examiner's report is adopted.
 - Elections: you vacate the Chair and the elections are administered by someone who is not a candidate for any position. Those elected and the proposers and seconders must be minuted.
 - It is a good idea to add the following resolutions to the agenda. If there is a change in any of these Officers the bank may ask to see the minutes of the AGM before changing the signatories.
 - Resolution: That the Branch's bank accounts be operated by the Chairperson, the Secretary and the Treasurer, with cheques to be signed and instructions given by any two of those office bearers.
 - Resolution: That the Branch elects to use Receipts and Payments accounting and a Statement of Assets and Liabilities.
 - Resolution: That the Branch elects to use an Independent Examiner to scrutinise the accounts.
 - Any other business.

SECRETARY

The Secretary is responsible for correspondence, including any connected with the programme for the year (such as booking venues and issuing invitations to speakers, confirming detailed arrangements with them and thanking them). As soon as the programme for the year has been finalised, it should be sent to the Society's Webmaster Web@NIFHS.org and Journal Editor NRoots@NIFHS.org and Publicity Officer Publicity@NIFHS.org as well as to the members of the Branch; these people should also be informed of any subsequent amendments.

The Secretary also represents the Branch at meetings of Council.

Acting as the main contact point for the Branch, the Secretary should be approachable and effective in welcoming visitors and prospective Members (sadly, there have been occasional reports of visitors being completely ignored and given the impression that they are unwelcome; they don't come back) and acting as an intermediary between Council Officers and Branch Members, who may be unfamiliar with what the Society can offer and whom to contact.

The Secretary is responsible for keeping minutes of general meetings and committee meetings - these should record decisions agreed and actions to be taken: clause 23 of the Branch Constitution states:

The Committee shall keep minutes of all:

- (1) appointments of Officers and Members of the Committee made by the Committee;
- (2) proceedings at general meetings of the Branch;
- (3) meetings of the Committee and sub-committees of the Committee including:
 - the names of the Members of the Committee present at the meeting;
 - the decisions made at the meetings; and
 - where appropriate the reasons for the decisions.

Each Branch should decide whether the Secretary should also record the proceedings and attendance at the monthly business meetings of the Branch.

Sub-clause (1) of clause 9 of the Branch Constitution states:

An annual general meeting shall be held each year during May. ... Following the annual general meeting, ... the annual report must be promptly sent to the General Secretary of the Society in time for the Society's annual general meeting in September.

To simplify correspondence it is helpful to set up a group e-mail for the Branch members and to design a standard letter heading, a compliments slip, a thank you card, a signing in sheet for members and visitors, a poster and so on, as in the examples depicted here for the Newtownabbey Branch.

It can also be helpful to have Committee members to assist with taking minutes of meetings and greeting visitors and new Members.

A welcome pack for new Members might contain a welcome letter, the Society and Branch Handbooks, an introduction to getting started with links to the main websites, a Family Group Sheet, an Individual Research Checklist, a Research Calendar, a Record of Ancestors form, a Profile Form, blank birth, marriage and death registration forms and information about the research booklets available for sale.

Each Branch has a public e-mail address, e.g. Newtownabbey@NIFHS.org, intended for use by the general public. The Secretary should check for e-mails and respond to any received, or arrange for this to be done by another member of the Committee. The Secretary is responsible for arranging any Special General Meeting and the Annual General Meeting held in May each year. Notice of the general meeting is to be given to members at least six weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

The Committee is responsible for the compilation of the Annual Report and its approval by the Trustees in the Branch and for providing copies of the Accounts and Annual Report to Branch Members in advance of the AGM. Immediately after the AGM the Secretary is responsible for providing a copy of the Minutes of the AGM to the General Secretary of the Society together with the names and rôles of all members of the newly elected Committee. Similarly, the Secretary is

The image displays several examples of correspondence templates for the Newtownabbey Branch of the North of Ireland Family History Society. These include a letterhead, a compliments slip, a thank you card, a poster, and a sign-in sheet.

Letterhead: NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Newtownabbey Branch. Secretary: Mairéad Adams, 23 Farm Lodge Park, Carrickfergus, BT38 8YB. Email: sandra@nifhs.org. Website: www.nifhs.org.

Compliments Slip: NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY. Unit C4, Valley Business Centre, 67 Church Road, Newtownabbey, Co. Dublin, BT26 7LS. Website: www.nifhs.org.

Thank you Card: NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY. Newtownabbey Branch. Thank you.

Poster: NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY. WHO ARE WE? WHAT DO WE DO? We are a voluntary non-profit-making organisation encouraging an interest in family history. We hold meetings, maintain a research centre, preserve and publish resources, and organise research visits for society members. NEWTOWNABBEY BRANCH. Meetings are held on the second Monday of the month in Glengormley High School 7.00pm - 9.00pm. First meeting of the new season: 8th September 2014. There are also branches in Ballymena, Belfast, Glenties, Glenties, Moy, Killybegs, Lamey, Lough, North Down & Antrim, Omagh, Portlough and Waterpark.

Sign-in Sheet: NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Newtownabbey Branch. Please sign to indicate attendance. The sheet lists members and visitors, with columns for Name, Address, and a box for indicating attendance.

responsible for promptly notifying the General Secretary of the name of any member who resigns from the Committee and for supplying the General Secretary with a copy of any printed material which includes the name of the Branch or the Society.

The Charity Commission recommends that Trustees are aware of implications of a charity's use of social media channels. The Secretary should record in the Committee Minutes the name of the administrators of social media used by the Branch and notify the General Secretary of the details.

TREASURER

The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining the Branch's accounts, including the Branch's bank accounts. When a bank account is opened it is normal for it to require the signatures of any two of three Officers of the Branch to operate the account – often the three Officers will be the Treasurer, the Secretary and the Chairperson. When there is a change of Officer, typically following the Annual General Meeting, the bank must be promptly informed of the change of signatories. The Treasurer should also have a receipt book with numbered receipts with carbon copies to record payments in cash. If the bank accounts change, please inform the Society Treasurer.

The Treasurer also represents the Branch at meetings of Council.

ENROLLING MEMBERS

A main task of the Treasurer is to enrol the members each year. If enrolling directly with the Branch, each member should complete a membership form and pay the required membership subscription.

Sub-clause (2) of clause 7 of the Branch Constitution states:

The Branch Treasurer shall promptly send the Membership Secretary of the Society particulars of each member together with that member's capitation fee (except that no capitation fee is payable for those awarded Honorary Membership by the Society). ...

Updated July 2017

Form A

Branch Treasurer's Use Only			Society Membership Secretary's Use only	
Date Received	Receipt Number	Branch Batch	Date Received	Batch Number
Place of Joining: Branch, Fair, C4.				

THE NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
Registered Charity NIC106071

APPLY TO THE BRANCH TREASURER

I (WE) APPLY FOR SINGLE (JOINT)* ANNUAL BRANCH MEMBERSHIP
(*Joint = special rate for 2 people living in one household)

PLEASE TICK "New" or "Renew"	TITLE	FORENAMES	SURNAME	MEMBERSHIP NUMBER
ONE MEMBER New				B
JOINT MEMBER New				B

ADDRESS: TELEPHONE - Code:
Postcode: Number:

Signed: (one member) Date:
Signed: (joint member) Date:

The information provided above will be handled by the Society in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The data you provide will be used for processing your membership and in providing you with services in line with the objects of the Society. We will not pass any data you provide to a third party, other than for the delivery of services on our behalf.

2017 - 2018	SUBSCRIPTION	What you are sending
Single Membership	£	
Joint Membership	£	
To make a donation to Branch funds, include the amount here: -		
NB Make cheques payable to: -		TOTAL

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the Society from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

GIFT AID DECLARATION

To Gift Aid your subscription you must tick the box below:

(Please tick) ☐ I want to Gift Aid my membership subscription and any donations I make now, in the future or have made in the past 4 years to THE NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay the difference.

Please notify the Society if you:

- want to cancel this declaration
- change your name or home address
- no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Please send this form and cheque immediately to the Branch Treasurer.

Name and Address of Branch Treasurer:

The Society's Membership Secretary provides the Branch with a draft membership **Form A** (on the left) which should be edited to take account of the needs of the Branch.

Form B (on the right) is used to send batches of capitation fees to the Society's Membership Secretary.

THE NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
Registered Charity NIC106071

Form B

Branch Batch Number: 2017-18 Branch Capitation Form

ONE OF THESE FORMS MUST ACCOMPANY ALL MEMBERSHIP MONIES GOING TO COUNCIL.

NB. To comply with Society procedures, and the Data Protection Act, every year, each member must complete and sign a membership form. (N.B. Joint members both sign the one form.)

Each time a Branch has a batch of renewals or new members, it should send:

- A Branch Capitation - Form B (i.e. this form),
- The relevant Membership Form A's (showing Membership Numbers), and
- A cheque for the total amount payable to "North of Ireland Family History Society"

to the NIFHS Membership Secretary, Unit C4, Valley Business Centre, 67 Church Road, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim BT36 7LS

The Membership Secretary updates the membership database, returns a list of members' details to the Branch Officer and forwards the money to the Society Treasurer. The membership database is the central record and is used only for journal despatch, labels etc.

PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

From BRANCH

Branch Officer Signature:

Date:

I enclose the following A Forms plus the total Capitation amount for our latest members.

Members	Forms	Rate	Amount
SINGLE MEMBERS	@ £14 Fee per individual (i.e. Capitation + 2 journals)	£
JOINT MEMBERS (i.e. 2 members living at the same address - on 1 form)	@ £22 Fee per pair of joint members (i.e. Capitation + 2 journals)	£
HONORARY MEMBERS	@ £0 (No Fee required, but Form is Required)	£
TOTALS			TOTAL £

FOR SOCIETY OFFICERS' USE ONLY

Date Received by Society Membership Secretary	Signature of Society Membership Secretary
Date Received by Society Treasurer	Signature of Society Treasurer

July 2017

Most Branches now permit members to enrol via the Society's website, the member's Form A information being emailed to the Branch and the Branch's share of the subscription being paid into the Branch's bank account.

RECORDING TRANSACTIONS & ASSETS

The Treasurer must also deal with all receipts and payments. All transactions must be properly recorded in such a way that statements of accounts can be drawn up and the accounts can be independently audited.

The Treasurer should also maintain a record of the Branch's assets and liabilities and should inform the Society Treasurer if any assets need to be covered by the Society's insurance policy. Council arranges insurance each year but, in the unlikely event that a Branch has extra responsibilities that are not covered by the Society's policy, perhaps because it has its own premises or employees, then the Branch should arrange suitable insurance.

Clauses 24, 25 and 26 of the Branch's Constitution are specific about the **Duty to keep Accounting Records**:

- (1) **The Committee shall keep accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain all the Branch's transactions** and which are such as to disclose at any time, with reasonable accuracy, the financial position of the Branch at that time and enable the Committee to ensure that, where any statements of accounts are prepared by them, those statements of accounts comply with the requirements of regulations.
- (2) The accounting records shall in particular contain entries showing from day to day all sums of money received and expended by the Branch, and the matters in respect of which the receipt and expenditure take place, and a record of the assets and liabilities of the Branch.
- (3) **The Committee shall preserve any accounting records made for the purposes of this clause in respect of the Branch for at least 6 years from the end of the financial year to which such records relate.**

and the **Annual Statements of Accounts**:

- (1) **The Committee shall prepare in respect of each financial year of the Branch a statement of accounts** complying with such requirements as to its form and contents as may be prescribed by current regulations. Where a Branch's gross income in any financial year does not exceed £100,000 or such other amount as may be determined by the Charity Commission, the Committee may, in respect of that year, elect to prepare **a receipts and payments account and a statement of assets and liabilities**, instead of a statement of accounts.
- (2) The Committee shall preserve any statement of accounts for at least 6 years from the end of the financial year to which any such statement relates.

and the **Annual Examination of Branch Accounts**:

The Committee shall arrange for the Branch's annual statement of accounts to be audited. If the Branch's gross income in that year does not exceed £100,000 in a financial year or such other amount as may be determined by the Charity Commission, the accounts for that year shall, at the election of the Committee, be examined by **an independent examiner**, that is to say an independent person who is reasonably believed by the Committee to have the requisite ability and practical experience to carry out a competent examination of the accounts.

If the Treasurer is unsure how best to discharge these duties, advice should be sought from the Treasurer of the Society.

The Charity Commission's documents CCNI EG024 *Running Your Charity Guidance* and CCNI ARR03 *Receipts and Payments Accounts* provide guidance.

The Society Treasurer provides Branch Treasurers with appropriate forms. These include **Form P** for recording payments, including deposits into the Branch's bank account, and **Form R** for recording receipts. Ensure that all supporting documentation is retained, e.g. invoices and receipt counterfoils; give a receipt for any cash payment; cheque payments will be recorded in bank statements. Highlight any payment to a Trustee as such payments have to be noted in the annual accounts.

Anywhere Branch

Record of Payments: 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018

Sheet No. 1 of ____

Line No.	Date	Payee & Details	Cheque Number	Capitalisation Fees £14 / £22	Hire of Venue	Guest Speakers	Stationery Postage & Photocopying	Expenditure Outings	Expenditure Social Events	Expenditure Special Projects	Officers Expenses	Bank Charges	Purchase of Publications	Loan Repayment	Donations	Others	Total
		(Brought Forward)															£0.00
1	25/04/17	LibrariesNI Room Hire	200561		£25.00												£25.00
2	05/15/17	Alec Sec Postage - AGM Notices	Cash				£7.22										£7.22
3																	

Anywhere Branch

Record of Receipts: 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018

Sheet No. 1 of ____

Line No.	Date	Payer & Details	Membership Fees	Donations & Visitors	Contributions (Tea/Coffee Etc)	Books & Publications Sales	Payments for Outings	Proceeds from Events	Grants Received	Loan Received	Bank Interest	Others	Total
		(Brought Forward)											£0.00
1	06/04/17	Branch Meeting (Cash) Refreshment			£ 2.20								£2.20
2	04/05/17	Late Comer (Cheque) Membership Capitalisation	£14.00										£14.00
3													

It is up to each Branch to decide how to keep its Cashbook, whether on paper, on a .doc file or on a spreadsheet; however it is helpful to use the headings required for completing the annual accounts - see the example of **Form C Accounts of Receipts and Payments** on the next page.

PREPARING THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Society's financial year runs from April 1st to March 31st. Following March 31st the annual accounts must be prepared and submitted, along with all supporting documents, to an Independent Examiner for scrutiny before being presented to the Branch's Annual General Meeting in May. There is usually little time available for this and it is worthwhile preparing for this at the beginning of March so that any problems can be resolved in good time. A copy of the accounts should also be sent to the Society Treasurer as soon as they are ready as consolidated accounts for the whole Society have to be compiled and sent to the Society's Independent Examiner for scrutiny before the Society's AGM in September.

Sub-clause (1) of clause 9 of the Branch's Constitution states:

An annual general meeting shall be held each year during May. At this meeting ... the statement of accounts for the financial year ending 31st March and the report of the auditor or independent examiner must be presented for adoption. Following the annual general meeting, the statement of accounts and the report of the independent examiner must be promptly sent to the Treasurer of the Society ... in time for the Society's annual general meeting in September.

The Society Treasurer will send each Branch the necessary forms to be completed.

Branch Accounts - Page 1
Form C

The North of Ireland Family History Society
 Registered Charity NIC106071
Belfast Branch
Receipts and Payments Account - Year ended 31st March 2018

2017-18					2016-17
Opening Balances Cash funds last year end 31st March 2017	Cashbook	Account 1	£1,517.30	£4,040.00	£4,688.43
		Account 2	£2,462.70		
		PayPal Account			
		Cash in Hand	£60.00		
Receipts	Type	Fee	Number	Sub-Total	
Membership Fees	Capitation only	£14.00	x	=	£1,176.00
	Single	£24.00	x	=	
	Joint	£32.00	x	=	
			x	=	
	Honorary	£0.00	x	= Nil	
Donations and Visitors					£64.00
Contributions (Tea & Coffee etc.)					
Book and Publication Sales					
Payments Received from Outings					£642.50
Proceeds Received from Events					£12.00
Gift Aid Refunds					£112.50
Loans Received					
Bank/Building Society Interest					£12.27
Grants Received					
Other					
Total Receipts					£2,019.27
Payments	Type	Capitation	Number	Sub-Total	
Capitation to Membership	Single	£14	x	=	£716.00
	Joint	£22	x	=	
Secretary	Honorary	£0	x	= Nil	
Hire of Venues					£540.53
Guest Speakers					£274.00
Stationery, Post & Copying					£37.27
Outings Expenditure					£942.50
Social Events Expenditure					£45.00
Special Projects Expenditure					£112.40
Officers Expenses					
Bank Charges / Interest					
Purchase of Publications					
Purchase of Equipment					
Loan Repayments					
Donations					
PayPal Charges					
Other					
Total Payments					£2,667.70
Net of Receipts and Payments (Total Receipts - Total Payments)					-£648.43
Closing Balances Cash funds this year end 31st March 2018	Cashbook	Account 1		£4,040.00	
		Account 2			
		PayPal Account			
		Cash in Hand			

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Form C

Form C

Accounts of Receipts and Payments

summarises the Receipts and Payments and the opening and closing Balances.

Form CS

Supplementary Information

requires details of any funds, such as grants, that were for restricted purposes; it also notes any payments to Trustees.

Form DL

List of Assets and Liabilities is self-explanatory.

Form D

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

summarises the cash and other assets to give a picture of the state of the Branch's finances.

The final form required for the annual accounts

is Form E

Statement of Independent Examiner.

Branch Accounts - Page 2 Form CS

The North of Ireland Family History Society
Registered Charity NIC106071
Belfast Branch
Receipts and Payments Account - Year ended 31st March 2018
Supplementary Information

Description of Funds	2017-18	2016-17
Cash Funds (as shown at Closing Balances on Form C)		£4,040.00
Restricted Funds		
Description - Purpose (if none, state "None")		
Endowment Funds		
Description (if none, state "None")		
Unrestricted Funds (= Cash - Restricted - Endowment)		£4,040.00

Payments to Trustees and connected persons		
Branch Chair	Payments on behalf of the Branch *	
Branch Secretary	Out-of-Pocket Expenses Payments *	
Branch Treasurer	Other Payments (Goods/Services) *	
	Total Payments to Trustees	
* If any, attach a detailed list. Otherwise, state "None".		

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Form CS

Branch Accounts - Page 3 Form DL

The North of Ireland Family History Society
Registered Charity NIC106071
Belfast Branch
List of Assets and Liabilities - Year ended 31 March 2018

Assets	Value 2017-18	Value 2016-17
# Description of Equipment		
1 Banner		£73.76
2 Cup Holders		£8.90
3 Data Projector		£127.54
Equipment Sub-Total		£210.20
# Description of Research Materials		
None		
Research Materials Sub-Total		
Any equipment or research materials assets held from previous years will be depreciated at 20% per annum.		
# Description of Branch Publications for Sale		
None		
Publications Sub-Total		
Value = Quantity held x Original unit cost price		
TOTAL - Equipment, Materials and Publications		£210.20
# Debtors		
None		
Assets		£210.20
# Liabilities		
Creditors		
Loans Outstanding		
Liabilities		

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Form DL

Branch Accounts - Page 4 Form D

The North of Ireland Family History Society
Registered Charity NIC106071
Belfast Branch
Statement of Assets and Liabilities - Year ended 31st March 2018

Assets	2017-18	2016-17
Cash Funds	Branch's Cash Funds this year end - as shown on Form C	£4,040.00
Equipment	Branch's Equipment Assets - as shown on Form DL	£210.20
Research Material	Branch's Research Materials Assets - as shown on Form DL	
Publications for Sale	Branch's Publications Assets - as shown on Form DL	
Debtors	Branch's Debtors - as shown on Form DL	
Total Assets		£4,250.20
Liabilities		
Creditors	Branch's Creditors Liabilities - as shown on Form DL	
Loans	Branch's Loans Liabilities - as shown on Form DL	
Total Liabilities		

Signed by the Treasurer of the Belfast Branch

Signature	Print name	Date
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>

Signed by one other Trustee in the Branch

Signature	Print name	Date
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>

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Form D

Branch Accounts Form E

The North of Ireland Family History Society
Registered Charity NIC106071
Belfast Branch
Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees in the Branch

I report on the accounts of the Belfast Branch of the North of Ireland Family History Society for the year ended 31st March 2018 which are set out therein on pages 1 to 4.

Respective responsibilities of trustees in the Branch and examiner
As the trustees in the Branch you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Commission under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report
I have examined your Branch accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act.

My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the Branch and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

- That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act
- That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records
- That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
- That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent examiner's statement
I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Signature	Print Name
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
Address	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>	
Relevant professional qualification or body	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>	
Date	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>	

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Form E

ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Branch is at liberty to appoint other, non-statutory officers, who may be allotted specific duties.

All members of the Committee are jointly responsible for the smooth running of the Branch, including the planning and organising of meetings, whether general, business or social, and other events. The Committee should ensure that the programme for the coming year is completed in good time so that it can be sent to the Members, the Webmaster, the Journal Editor and the Publicity Officer; this entails doing your homework on possible events before Committee meetings and not just hoping that everyone else has done theirs – following the Branch AGM you have the rest of May and June to prepare the programme, leaving it later finds everyone on holiday.

The usual pattern in Branches is to have a meeting once a month, excluding July and August. A Branch should avoid meeting on the second Wednesday of the month because that is when the Society's Council meets at 7:30 p.m. or, in winter, 11:00 a.m. on the second Saturday. The dates of other Branch meetings can be seen on the Society's website.

The normal pattern is to hold a **Business Meeting** each month from September to May or June. Usually there will be a talk by a visiting speaker or a member of the Branch or else a workshop to help the members advance their research. Often the December meeting is a **Social Meeting**: perhaps a party or dinner. The June meeting might take the form of an outing to places of interest, followed by a meal. May is when a Branch holds its **Annual General Meeting**, perhaps in conjunction with a Business Meeting, before the Society's Annual General Meeting in September.

The companion document, the **Activity Handbook**, is a useful source of ideas for speakers and other activities such as visits and projects.

If short of ideas look at last autumn's journal to see what other Branches have done and contact their Secretaries for comments and contact details.

The Federation for Ulster Local Studies, of which our Society is a member, maintains a register of speakers and their topics at www.fuls.org.uk/speakers.html.

It is always worth having a reserve programme up your sleeve in case a speaker is unable to come at the last minute.

DISSOLUTION OF THE BRANCH

Clause 5 of the Branch Constitution spells out the procedure to be adopted if a Branch is to be dissolved:

- (1) If the members resolve to dissolve the Branch, or if the Council of the Society resolves that the Branch be dissolved, the Members of the Committee shall remain in office as Branch Trustees and be responsible for winding up the affairs of the Branch in accordance with this clause.
- (2) The Branch Trustees must notify the Chairperson of the Society promptly that the Branch has been dissolved.
- (3) The Branch Trustees must collect in all the assets of the Branch and must pay or make provision for all the liabilities of the Branch.
- (4) The Branch Trustees must transfer any remaining property or money to the Treasurer of the Society.
- (5) In no circumstances shall the net assets of the Branch be paid to or distributed among the members of the Branch.
- (6) The Branch Trustees must send the Treasurer of the Society the Branch's final statement of accounts and report of the independent examiner, together with all records required under Clauses 24 and 25 for the previous six years.
- (7) The Branch Trustees must send the Secretary of the Society the final report of the Branch.

DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY

Clause 5 of the Society Constitution spells out the procedure to be adopted if the Society is to be dissolved:

- (1) If the members resolve to dissolve the Society the Members of Council shall remain in office as Society Trustees and be responsible for winding up the affairs of the Society in accordance with this clause.
- (2) The Society Trustees must collect in all the assets of the Society and must pay or make provision for all the liabilities of the Society.
- (3) The Society Trustees must apply any remaining property or money:
 - (a) directly for the Objects;

(b) by transfer to any charity or charities for purposes the same as or similar to the Charity;
(c) in such other manner as the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland ("the Commission") may approve in writing in advance.

(4) The members may pass a resolution before or at the same time as the resolution to dissolve the Charity specifying the manner in which the Society Trustees are to apply the remaining property or assets of the Charity and the Society Trustees must comply with the resolution if it is consistent with paragraphs (a)–(c) inclusive in sub-clause (3) above.

(5) In no circumstances shall the net assets of the Society be paid to or distributed among the members of the Society.

(6) The Society Trustees must notify the Commission promptly that the Charity has been dissolved. If the Society Trustees are obliged to send the Charity's accounts to the Commission for the accounting period which ended before its dissolution, they must send the Commission the Charity's final accounts.

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**David Honneyman**



**Help from a Member**



**The late Randal Gill**



**Randal Gill Library**



**Map Room**