

East Surrey Family History Society

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46th Annual General Meeting held online by Zoom and in person on
23 March 2024 at 12.00 p.m. at North Cheam Baptist Church

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|--------------------|-----------------|
| President: | Paul Blake |
| Chairman: | Hilary Blanford |
| Minutes Secretary: | Anne Ramon |

1. Our President, Paul Blake, welcomed us to the 46th AGM. 37 members attended in person; 22 members attended by Zoom. Total attendance of 61. Voting was possible in person, as usual, and via Polls for those online. Our Constitution requires only a simple voting majority.
2. **Apologies** were received, and noted, from the following Members: Brenda Hawkins, Ann Turnor, Marda Dixon, Rita Russell, Malcolm Scriven, Nigel Turner.
3. The Minutes of the last AGM dated 1st April 2023 were approved *nem con*.
4. **Committee Report.** Our Chairman, Hilary Blanford, reported on a busy year.
The Lingfield group has been in full operation this year for in-person meetings and runs a number of on-going transcription projects. The Southwark group met again in person in February 2024 following extended renovations at the John Harvard Library and in the interim they have enjoyed visits to the Wellcome and British Libraries, and guided walks in Bermondsey and Peckham. At a Christmas Lunch at the historic George Inn on Borough High Street, the group was joined by some of the trustees and post-holders. Hilary emphasised that these activities were open to all members of the Society, space permitting.
There were 24 meetings on Zoom this year, attended by a total of 941 people, giving an average of about 39 per meeting. Hilary thanked Christine Peel, Lorna Thomas and Marda Dixon for writing up these events for the Journal as well as Chris Green, our Journal Editor, and Rob Cambridge, our Webmaster, for publishing our programme of events.
We ran a Writers' Course last year with Gill Blanchard and we are reaping the rewards now in our Journal.
Surrey History Centre is making good use of the camera we donated last year, having filmed 23 out of the 29 books from the Royal Philanthropic Society, which is a project we agreed to support.
We ran our second Virtual Fair in January 2023, hosting 25 groups in separate breakout rooms, and at the completion of the event we enjoyed a useful 'wash-up' session where attending societies shared their experience of the day. The

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comments were all favourable and we were thanked for providing such a simple and useful avenue for family historians to meet a number of Society representatives, and importantly, each other. The next Virtual Fair, hosted again by East Surrey FHS, will be on 25 January 2025.

We organised a highly successful on-line transcription event, where pairs of members, each in their own breakout room, transcribed and checked a range of burial records for patients of Netherne Hospital. Hilary thanked all those who took part and plans to finish checking the transcriptions prior to our joint Talk with Tea event on 25 April 2024, to be held at Surrey History Centre. We are looking out for another similar project.

The Society attended six Fairs in the year to December 2023, and Hilary thanked all those members who helped transport and man the bookstall and Help Desk.

Future events in 2025. We should like to run an online Help Desk as part of the Lambeth Local History Fair in September, and we hope to participate in a Family History Day event with Sutton Archives, possibly in conjunction with Open House events, in the hope of finding new audiences from whom we hope to recruit new members.

Hilary said she hoped we had provided something for everyone and that members would continue to support the Society. There were no questions from the Floor or from the Zoom attendees. The latter group sent a number of messages thanking the committee for providing access via Zoom and for their overall work in running the Society.

5. The **Treasurer's Report.** Our Treasurer, Tamsin Abbey, started by noting a couple of corrections that will be made to the figures that you have seen. The debtors should be £868 rather than £1,095 for the balance sheet to balance with the fund carried forward, and the split of the subscriptions should be £6,965 UK and £597 overseas with the same total of £7,562.

We have made a surplus of £1,694 in 2023, following a deficit in 2022 of £1,351, that was after a donation of £2,800 to the Surrey History Centre. Without that donation in 2022, the surplus would have been £1,449.

Comparing 2023 to 2022, the income has dropped by £550, from £10,542 to £9,992: the main reduction is from the drop in subscription income over the year.

The Expenditure has dropped by £3,594, from £11,893 to £8,299, the largest part due to the donation of £2,800 that we made in 2022 and not this year. The journal costs have reduced this year, due to the reduction in packing & mailing of over £400. The cost of fairs and events has reduced by over £600. Over 2024, this is likely to increase due to the opening up of the Southwark Group talks and

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the need to increase the budget for meetings due to the rise in costs generally. In preparing these accounts, she thanked Monica and June for taking over the book stall and membership during 2023 and providing her with the book stall and gift aid information for the accounts for the first time. She also thanked Sue Adams for having to provide a breakdown of the Parish Chest statements from the individual orders for the second half of 2023 as they stopped sending us the monthly summary statements. Lesley Barker has been our independent examiner for these accounts and was able to review them with her usual efficiency, for which Tamsin thanked her.

Tamsin then asked for questions:

Question from Peter Heather: The annual accounts were not published in the March Journal last year or this year, as requested. Can this be addressed?

Tamsin agreed that this would be ideal, but the timeline is fine and there have been problems and delays in compiling the accounts such as incomplete statements from Parish Chest-

There were no further questions.

The President asked for members to adopt the accounts. Proposer: Dennis Hepworth. Seconder: Janet Smith. Votes in favour: 43. Adopted.

6. **Matters Arising not already covered in the reports**

Peter Heather asked if there had been updates to online records by Nick McDonald as mentioned in last year's Minutes. Hilary advised No.

Sue Adams enquired about progress on the Croydon Parish booklet. She offered her help, which was noted.

There were no further Matters Arising.

7. **Appointment of Examiner.**

The meeting proposed that Lesley Barker continue as Examiner, with our grateful thanks. Proposer: Tamsin Abbey; Seconder: Sue Adams. Votes in favour: 47. Carried.

8. **Change to Constitution to Reduce the Quorum for EGMs and AGMs**

This change has been advertised in the last two Journals and discussed with the Charity Commission. This meeting resolves to change section 8 of the constitution from:

'c) A quorum at an AGM or EGM shall be 25 of the Members present or one third of the paid up membership eligible to vote, whichever is the least', to

'c) A quorum at an AGM or EGM shall be 20 of the Members present or one third of the paid up membership eligible to vote, whichever is the least,'

The voting majority will remain unchanged as a simple majority.

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Proposer: The Trustees. Seconder: Mary Bristow. Votes in favour: 44. Carried

9. Change to Bank Mandate for the Society's Virgin Accounts

The meeting resolves to remove Peter Heather, Liz Moss, Monica Polley and Joanna Reynolds and to appoint Tamsin Abbey, Hilary Blanford and Anne Ramon as signatories to the above accounts.

Proposer: The Trustees. Seconder: Emma Cox. Votes in favour 46. Carried

10. Election of Officers and Members of Executive Committee

| Post | Name | Proposed by | Seconded by | Years eligible |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Chairman | Hilary Blanford | Nick McDonald | Jane Beeley | 2 |
| Secretary | Alan Essex | Marda Dixon | Anne Ramon | 2 |
| Treasurer | Tamsin Abbey | Brenda Hawkins | June Hayles | 2 |
| Committee Members | Marda Dixon | Lesley Barker | June Hayles | 2 |
| | Anne Ramon | Liz Craig | Nick McDonald | 2 |
| | Geoff Fairbairn | Russ Barnett | Marion Attew | 3 |
| | June Hayles | Rob Cambridge | Marda Dixon | 4 |
| | Lynn Gunter | June Hayles | Lorna Thomas | 5 |
| | Sue Adams | Peter Heather | Rita Russell | 5 |

The Chairman. Hilary Blanford. Votes in favour: 43. Carried.

Other Committee Members as listed above were voted on *en bloc*. Votes in favour 48. Carried

That completed the formal business of the Meeting. The President thanked Stephen Dixon for his help with the venue, and all those members who had given their time this year in support of the Society. The President thanked those attending this AGM in person, and those attending over Zoom.

11. Any Other Business.

Monica Polley reported that the Society leaflet was in urgent need of revision.

Monica expressed concern that members had not been provided with a written copy of the Trustees Annual Report (TAR). Hilary replied that our Constitution does not require it to be presented at our AGM and said that it will be posted, in due course, on the Society website at www.eastsurreyfhfs.org.uk. The treasurer added that the TAR was a matter for the Charity Commission.

The meeting finished at 12.50 p.m.