

SOUTH WEST AREA GROUP OF FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETIES

CONSTITUTION

9th. OCTOBER 2004.

1. **THE NAME** of the group shall be the South West Area Group of Family History Societies hereinafter referred to as “the Group”.
2. **THE AIMS** of the Group shall be:
 - 2.1. to promote the study of family history and genealogy of the South West region of Great Britain, namely the area covered by the historic counties of Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Glamorgan, Gloucestershire, Hampshire (including the Isle of Wight), Monmouthshire, Somerset, and Wiltshire;
 - 2.2. to co-ordinate and support activities of the family history societies and similar organisations in that region;
 - 2.3. to liaise with the Federation of Family History Societies, Regional Archive Councils, and other appropriate bodies at national and regional levels, in order to represent the interests and needs of the Group and its members.
3. **MEMBERSHIP**
 - 3.1. All recognised family history societies in the South West region of Great Britain as defined in Clause 2.1. may apply for membership of the Group.
 - 3.2. If a member of the Group
 - (a) acts in a way which is seen to bring the Group into disrepute, or
 - (b) pursues Group business with a third party without the knowledge or delegated authority of the Council,a formal motion to debar that member may be proposed and seconded at a Council Meeting provided that adequate notice of the motion has been given in accordance with Clause 6.1. The motion is passed if 75% of member organisations vote in favour of the motion. That member will then be debarred from attending further meetings of the Group or participating in any Group activities for the period specified in the motion.
4. **COUNCIL**
 - 4.1. The governing body of the Group shall be the Council, which shall comprise the Group Officers as defined in Clause 5.1 and an agreed number of representatives from each member organisation duly authorised by that organisation. One of the said representatives shall be designated the voting representative.
 - 4.2. The Council shall meet as often as is necessary but at least once in each calendar year. One meeting in each calendar year shall be the Annual General Meeting.
 - 4.3. A Special Meeting of the Council shall be arranged by the Chairman and Secretary to be held within six weeks of receiving a written request to do so from the secretaries of four or more member organisations.
5. **GROUP OFFICERS**
 - 5.1. The Officers of the Group shall be Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. These Officers shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting by the membership of the Council and their periods of office shall commence at the end of that meeting.
 - 5.2. Nominations for office may be submitted in writing beforehand or made orally at the said Annual General Meeting. The retiring officers shall be eligible for re-election.
 - 5.3. In the event of the Chairman being absent from a meeting, the members of the Council shall elect one of their number as Acting Chairman to chair that meeting.

6. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

- 6.1. The Council shall normally meet on a day, at a time and in a place that has been agreed or confirmed at a previous Council meeting. The Chairman and Secretary may arrange additional meetings. Notices of all meetings must be sent to all member organisations not less than four weeks prior to the dates of the meetings.
- 6.2. Meetings will be based on the established model agenda together with any specific agenda items that have been requested by individual member organisations not less than six weeks prior to the date of the meeting. A copy of the agenda for each meeting shall be circulated by the Secretary with the notice of that meeting.
- 6.3. The voting representatives of more than half of the member organisations shall constitute a quorum.
- 6.4. Other than matters referred to in Clause 3.2, and 8, all questions before the Council shall be decided by simple majority of voting representatives.

7. FINANCES

- 7.1. Member organisations shall pay an annual subscription to the Group as agreed by the Council from time to time.
- 7.2. All income of the Group, other than that which accrues from special activities or projects, shall be applied solely towards the promotion and execution of the aims and business of the Group as defined in clause 2 above. No portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly in any manner by way of profit to any member of the Council, provided that nothing herein shall prevent re-imbursement of reasonable and proper out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Group.
- 7.3. The Treasurer shall keep an account of all financial transactions of the Group. The accounts will be closed at the end of July each year and a Statement of Income and Expenditure for the year shall be prepared. The accounts and the Statement of Income and Expenditure shall be subject to internal inspection, and the Statement shall be presented for approval at the Annual General Meeting.

8. ALTERATION TO CONSTITUTION

No alteration to this Constitution shall be made except by a motion passed by at least 75% of member organisations voting in favour. Proposals to alter the Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the Chairman or Secretary not less than two months before the Council meeting at which they are proposed to be made, and shall be notified by him/her to the secretaries of all member organisations not less than four weeks before the said meeting.

9. DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of the Group, its assets shall be distributed equally among the organisations in membership at the date of dissolution.