



**BANGOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS  
FOR YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2023**

**CHARITY NUMBER – NI 104010**

**Principal Address: 28 Ballyholme Esplanade, Bangor, County Down BT20 5LZ**

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## **Bangor Historical Society (BHS)**

### **Annual Report for the year ending 31 December 2023**

The Trustees of Bangor Historical Society are pleased to submit to The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland its Report and Accounts, including a Report by an Independent Examiner, for the period 1 January to 31 December 2023.

#### **Trustees**

**The Trustees / Committee members in 2023 were –**

<b>Robert McKinley</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Ian Wilson</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
<b>Ronald McClements</b>	<b>Honorary Secretary</b>
<b>Adrienne Brown</b>	<b>Honorary Treasurer</b>
<b>Dr. Sandra Millsopp</b>	<b>Trustee</b>
<b>William McMullan</b>	<b>Trustee</b>

#### **BHS Trustees' Committee**

The Committee met twice during the year. It discussed the Society's financial status, approved speakers and themes for meetings and considered heritage projects for possible support. The Committee's aim was to ensure that the Society's activities and achievements would generate 'public benefit' in line with the guidance published by The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

#### **Membership**

On 31 December 2023 the Society had 66 members drawn mainly from the Ards and North Down Borough Council area. Visitor numbers however were only 66 compared with 203 on 31 December 2022.

### The Society's Purpose

The Society's objectives, as set out in Part 2 of its constitution are-

(a) The study of and the encouragement of public interest in history, folklore, archaeology, and antiquities with special reference to the local area.

(b) The holding of lectures, visits and outings and the encouragement of the study of local history.

#### *Purposes under The Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008*

(a) The Advancement of Education; and

(b) 'Heritage' under The Advancement of the Arts, Culture, Heritage or Science.

### Public and Private Benefits

The Society's activities directly benefit its members and visitors. Attendees at meetings and outings enjoy learning interesting historical facts in a social atmosphere. As well as contributing to lifelong learning, the social interaction on these occasions is particularly helpful in combatting loneliness.

Beneficiaries also include speakers and the guides and proprietors of historic buildings and museums also coach companies and restaurants/cafes who service the Society's outings although these were not used in 2023. Queen's Parade Methodist Church benefited from rent for the Society's use of its Wesley Hall.

Insurance premiums, which the Society pays to The Federation for Ulster Local Studies to cover the Society's public liability, obviously benefit the insurers.

The Society may decide to support projects and events which promote or preserve local heritage – a benefit to the present and future community in addition to supporting the tourist trade.

These private benefits are incidental and necessary because the Society could not function without these services from the wider community.

The Society's purposes do not lead to any harm.

### **Membership of other organisations**

The Society is a member of the **Federation for Ulster Local Studies Ltd (FULS)** which promotes communication and co-operation between local historical societies and with similar bodies. The Federation's magazine 'Due North' also provides informative papers on historical subjects.

Through FULS the Society insures its members by a Public Liability Insurance Scheme.

The Society is also a member of **The Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)** which represents voluntary and community bodies throughout Northern Ireland and has provided valuable advice to the Society.

Contact is ongoing with FULS and NICVA to ensure that the Society is kept informed of relevant matters and offered relevant training courses. In 2023 the Society's Treasurer attended an online webinar on Trustee Annual Reporting.

### **Administration**

The Society held 7 monthly meetings in 2023 from January to April and September to December, excluding March, when the meeting was cancelled due to a severe snowstorm.

The Society acknowledges with thanks the excellent support given by the staff of Queen's Parade Methodist Church, Bangor where meetings were held using the excellent facilities of its Wesley Hall.

### **Constitution**

**A copy of the Society's Constitution is attached at Appendix A.**

## **Outputs and Achievements - 2023**

In accordance with the purposes of the Society as stated in its Constitution and under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, the following is a summary of the Society's outputs and achievements in 2023.

### **Activities**

In the calendar year 2023 the Society held 7 monthly meetings from January to December at 8.00pm on the second Thursday of each month (excluding March).

### **Programme of Meetings**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Speaker</u></b>	<b><u>Subject</u></b>
12 January	Peter Vannucci	<i>The County Down Railway</i>
9 February	Mercia Flanagan	<i>C.S.Lewis</i>
13 April	John Martin	<i>Andrew Bryson of the Cotton</i>
14 September	Jennifer O'Leary	<i>The Padre</i>
12 October	Alister McReynolds	<i>Captain Jack Crawford</i>
9 November	Peter Forbes	<i>Lt.Col.'Paddy' Blair Mayne</i>
14 December	Leanne Briggs	<i>Sir James Hamilton and the Raven Maps</i>

### **Outings**

Two guided walks were held this year. On 17 June members were conducted around sites of historic interest in Helen's Bay by Robin Masefield (author and historian). The village of Groomsport was explored on 28 October with guidance from Peter Gibson of the heritage group 'Discover Groomsport'.

### **Supporting Heritage-Section 2(f) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008**

The Society donated £500 to the Bangor based charity 'Open House' which aims to regenerate this city and preserve its heritage.

The sum of £100 was given to 'Discover Groomsport', a charity which promotes the rich history and heritage of this village.

The Society was represented at Heritage Cluster Group meetings organized by the Heritage Development Officer at North Down Museum for groups promoting heritage in the Ards and North Down Borough Council area.

### **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

GDPR compliance is regularly monitored, and members presented with copies of the Society's Privacy Policy. On registration members advise the Society how they wish to be contacted. Details of members (the minimum needed) are held by the Secretary and the Treasurer alone. Lists of members' contact details are destroyed when they cease to renew membership.

### **The Society's Website – <http://www.bangorhistoricalsocietyni.org/>**

Throughout 2023 the website was maintained by volunteers and requests from researchers were received and dealt with appropriately.

### **Publicity**

Each talk was reported by Trustee Dr. Sandra Millsopp and published in the local newspaper '*The County Down Spectator*', along with date and time of the next meeting. Dr. Millsopp's reports also appear on the Society's website.

## Accounts

Bangor Historical Society's revenue in 2023 came from an annual membership subscription of £15 and visitor's fee of £3. No additional funding was sought or received.

The Society's accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 have been audited by **Elise Richardson, Chartered Accountant, 25 Ardnavanagh Avenue, Conlig, Newtownards BT23 7XE.**

Ms Richardson also conducted an **Independent Examiner's Report** for the same period.

The Society's Bankers are **Santander, Bridle Road, Bootle L30 4GB.**

The Society's address is **28 Ballyholme Esplanade, Bangor, County Down BT20 5LZ**

See **Appendix B** for copies of accounts and related documents.

### **Public Benefit Guidance from the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland**

The Society's Trustees bore in mind The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on the public benefit requirement when planning and decision making throughout 2023.

Bangor Historical Society is well supported by its membership, the majority of whom renew their subscriptions annually which suggests that they derive benefit from it. They always show warm appreciation of the excellent talks provided and often express delight at having learned something new from a speaker. They also clearly enjoy social interaction with fellow history enthusiasts. Although suggestions may be made to trustees by members, complaints are very rare and of a minor nature.

In co-operation with North Down Museum and The County Down Spectator, the Society's activities help to keep both local and wider historical subjects at the forefront of public interest and debate in this area.


The Society continued to promote the preservation of heritage which aids the regeneration of this area through attracting visitors.

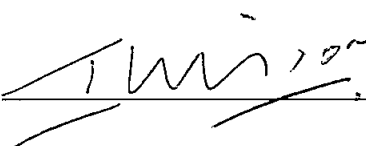
In summary, the Trustees of Bangor Historical Society are confident that this Society provides public benefit both to its membership and the wider community in Ards and North Down.

**Signed below by Trustees of Bangor Historical Society**

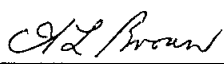
**Date: 10 October 2024**

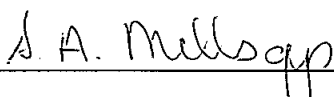
Trustees of Bangor Historical Society - 2023


Robert McKinley - President 

Ian Wilson – Chairman 

Ronald McClements – Honorary Secretary 

Adrienne Brown – Honorary Treasurer 

Dr. Sandra Millsopp – Trustee 

–  
William McMullan – Trustee 

10 October 2024

## CONSTITUTION OF BANGOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### 1) Name

The Society shall be called the **Bangor Historical Society**

### 2) Objects

- a) The study of and the encouragement of public interest in history, folklore, archaeology and antiquities with special reference to the local area.
- b) The holding of lectures, visits and outings and the encouragement of the study of local history.

### 3) Membership

Membership will be open to any person supporting the objects of the Society and paying the annual subscription. The annual subscription shall be decided by the committee and subject to approval of the members at the Annual General Meeting of the Society. A membership card will be issued annually.

### 4) President

As necessary, members shall appoint a President who will be a member of the Executive Committee. The President may hold office for up to five years and may be re-appointed. The President, or delegated deputy, will take the chair for the election of the incoming Chairman. In the event of equality of voting the President will have a casting vote.

### 5) Executive Committee

- a) At the Annual General Meeting of the Society the members shall elect from its number, a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and up to seven other members to form an Executive Committee. A person so elected shall commence his/her year of office immediately after election.
- b) Subject to this Constitution the Executive Committee shall have the general control, direction and management of the affairs, funds and records of the Society.
- c) The Executive Committee shall meet at least twice in each year and the quorum for such meetings shall be the majority of the Committee.
- d) The Chairman at each executive meeting shall have a casting vote in the event of equality of voting.
- e) If the need should arise the Executive Committee shall have the power of co-option.

### 6) Meetings of Members

- a) The Annual General meeting of the Society shall be held at the last meeting of the session - normally in April – or at such date, time and place as the Executive Committee by resolution determine.
- b) The agenda of the Annual General Meeting shall contain the following :
  - i) Secretary's Report
  - ii) Treasurer's Audited Report
  - iii) Election of the Executive Committee
  - iv) Appointment of Auditor
  - v) Any other business
- c) Each member shall have one vote on each proposal/motion at any General Meeting of the Society, except in voting at elections when the Chairman shall have a casting vote in the event of equal voting.
- d) Notices of motions to be debated at the Annual General Meeting must arrive in writing with the Secretary at least fourteen days before the meeting.
- e) Special General Meetings of the Society, may be called by decision of the Executive Committee as soon as may be after the receipt of a requisition in writing to the secretary signed on behalf of not less than one third of the members, and stating the object of the meeting. Any such meeting thus

called must be notified in writing to the membership not less than fourteen days before the date of the meeting.

- f) The notice of a Special General Meeting shall state the purpose for which it is to be held and no business, other than that specified in the notice convening it, may be dealt with.

**7) Financial Provisions**

- a) The financial year of the Society shall be 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December.  
b) All funds of the Society shall be kept in a recognised bank or building society agreed by the Executive Committee and all receipts and disbursements of the Society shall be recorded in the Treasurer's accounts. The accounts shall be kept in the name of the Society.  
c) The Executive Committee shall have power to administer such funds.  
d) The accounts of the Society shall be audited annually by the Auditor appointed by the members at the Annual General Meeting.

**8) Interpretation and Procedures**

In all matters of procedure and interpretation of this constitution the decision of the Chairman shall be final.

**9) Amendment**

The Constitution of the Society may only be amended by a resolution carried by not less than two thirds of the votes given thereon at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Society, provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been given in writing to each member of the Society at least fourteen days before the meeting.

**10) Affiliations**

The Society may affiliate with the Federation for Ulster Local Studies or such other body the membership of which would be deemed to be in the best interests of the Society. However, any such affiliation shall require the prior approval of the members at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting called for the purpose.

**11) Miscellaneous**

- a) Any object or document given to the Society for safekeeping or otherwise shall remain the property of the owner unless otherwise decreed by him/her in writing and signed in the presence of two independent witnesses.  
b) A copy of this Constitution, together with any amendments thereto, shall be delivered free of charge to any member of the Society on request.  
c) The Society may be dissolved by the consent of three fourths of the votes given thereon at a special General Meeting called for the purpose, of which twenty-eight days notice has been given in writing.  
d) If on dissolution of the Society there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any assets whatsoever such assets shall not be kept among its members but shall be given or transferred to such other charity or charities having objects similar to the Society as the Committee may decide.

Signed :

*J. Wilson* (Chairman)

Date :

10 - 12 - 15