

Genealogy Report 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023

### **A Helping Hand - again**

May's meeting started with a discussion of a programme for the next year's meetings and an appeal for assistance in running the group. Regrettably nobody volunteered to help! This was followed by general discussion and another practical session where members helped each other to advance some part of their family history research. The main sources for the family history researcher are the traditional Birth, Marriage and Death Registration records, Parish Registers, Census Records and Wills. Then there are electoral rolls, various tax records and newspaper reports. Modern technology has added DNA testing to the tool box. Fortunately, much of this information has been indexed by a combination of volunteers and commercial organisations and these indices are available on the internet.

Websites such as FamilySearch, Ancestry, FindMyPast and MyHeritage can search all their records to find records which may be relevant to the ancestor you are researching and present them to you, giving those most likely first. Other sites such as FreeBMD, FreeReg, FreeCen, or the On-Line Parish Clerk projects only give access to a single database but can be more effective searching that data base.

When carrying out your family history research it is important to use the right tool at the right time. For example, if FamilySearch finds your ancestor in in the 1841 census, the 1851 census and the 1861 census but not in the 1871 census then it is likely that your ancestor died between 1861 and 1871 not far from where they were living in 1861. FreeBMD is the best tool to find that death. The more experienced researcher will know when to swap from one tool to another. One person may be familiar with FamilySearch and another with FreeBMD. We can all learn from each other.

The next meeting of the Genealogy Group will be on Thursday 1st of June at 2 p.m. at Enterprise House. The topic will be 'Using Wills in Family History'.

Alan Swindale