Well, I’ve survived my second year and I wonder if President Donald Trump will make his first!
After last year’s Society Day and AGM the team and I were very pleased with the results and the positive feedback that we received.

It might not seem to you that the society as moved forward but, I can assure you, we have. Many things have been happening behind the scenes, the biggest one being the website and our Webmaster, Bill will mention this in his report.

Again, on several aspects of the society we have had to take a step back and concentrate on doing one thing at a time and sometimes this has taken three times longer, because we have had to start from scratch as the information required was not easy accessible or even recorded.

Some of you might have notice that the quality of the paper in the Cockney Ancestor seems better, this is because we have changed printers and we should now be seeing the benefits of this in our accounts. We have also decided to put this out to tender every three years.

I, along with a small team, have been out and about promoting the society. February saw us at Hidden Histories at Tower Hamlets Cemetery, it was cold but it was a good turnout. June was busy for us as we promoted the society at Essex FHS Day and we also attended the Canal Festival at Mile End which was very busy and very productive. The last one of the year was at the Round Chapel in Clapton this was a small two-hour event but gosh we were busy. I will continue to promote the society at events when possible and have already got dates booked for 2017.

Our branches continue to work smoothly but we still require more people to help at branches. This would reduce the number of jobs that people are doing. So please give it some thought - the Society NEEDS YOU. Our Newham & Redbridge Branch have excelled themselves by doing a project on the people behind the names within the church of St Mary’s the Virgin at Wanstead and the results can be purchased today with all the proceeds going to the church – Well done Robert, Sandra and their merry little helpers.

I will not thank people individually as running the society has really been a team effort, and everyone as played a part. But I really do appreciate your support and the way in which we have all pulled together. We have had a laugh along the way, we have found talents that we never knew we had but there has been some very trying times and this does deserve a mention. So a special THANK YOU must go out to Bill, the Webmaster because he has had many sleepless nights over problems with the website. Also Sue, our Membership Secretary as had the enormous task of having to chase members to pay the correct amount, so thank you Sue.

I have continued doing my help desk at Barking & Dagenham Archives once a month, but from this year I will be doing it every two months.

I will be attending as many branch meetings that I can and please feel free to approach me with any ideas, suggestions that you have on improving the society.

Thank You