



# **Branch Financial Returns**

### **Recording income and expenditure**

It is important to keep financial records: they do not need to be complicated but each NASS branch will need to keep a simple record of income and expenditure.

The reason for completing a branch return is because NASS is required to include the branch balances in our accounts at the end of the financial year. This required by the Charity Commission.

The NASS financial year ends in December. The branch is sent a simple form which shows the branch activity through the year and how much is in the branch account. These are usually sent out at the beginning of December and we ask that they are returned by the end of January.

### **Advice for NASS bank accounts**

- NASS banks with Barclays Bank and we encourage branches to use the same bank, if this is practical.
- The account should be in the name of NASS (name of branch) eg NASS (Swindon Branch) or NASS Swindon.
- The charity's registration number (RCN 272258) should be on the cheques and on any information produced by the branch itself.
- If you are based in Scotland you will need to add SC 041347.
- Any account which the branch opens must be operated with two people signing cheques. No account should be used where only one person signs cheques. This is to protect you and the branch.

### **The advantages of standing orders**

Any branch member who has or is currently volunteering to look after the money side of things for their branch will know how fiddly and time consuming this responsibility can be. For example, finding change for people, keeping track of who has paid what and when, chasing non payments, carrying cash around and having to bank it regularly and keeping accurate records for branch returns.

Many branches have decided to ask their members to switch from paying each session in cash to paying by standing order or by cheque in advance. Not only does this relieve the pressure on the person who is in charge of collecting the money, but it can also be very beneficial to the finances of a NASS branch.

When branches charge they can predict their finances more effectively and can plan payments in advance. This is particularly important if a branch does not have much surplus money in their bank account.

Branches who are more financially stable are able to support members who perhaps cannot pay as much, plan fundraising and produce materials to promote the branch and encourage new members to join and keep coming back.

### **What information is required each year**

Each branch will need to fill out two forms either electronically (in one MS Excel file, with two worksheets) or in hand copy and return them with copies of the bank statement showing the final balance for the year.

### **The Branch Return Form**

This is where branches are asked to record income and expenditure for the 12 month period from January to December and it has been broken down into a number of areas, for example:

- Subscriptions received from branch members
- Donations received
- Payments for use of facilities
- Payments made to health care professionals
- Expenditure invoices relating to 2015 but paid in 2016

There is a box called branch funds breakdown towards the bottom of the form which aims to eliminate errors and speed up the processing of the returns at the NASS office.

As many branches have more than one bank account this breakdown requires you to enter all balances and tick off that you have included the supporting bank statement for each account.

This year it is required that you record any expenditure invoices relating to 2015 that have been or are due to be paid in 2016. You should record this total on page 2 and specify details for these payments on page 3.

### **The schedule**

The second form is a separate schedule for other payments and receipts as well as donations. This allows branches more space on the return to list their other transactions clearly.

### **\*\*IMPORTANT\*\***

In accordance with best financial practice, branches are required to list all donations given and received separately with the names of the donor or beneficiary supplied.

### **Gift Aid**

As many branch treasurers will know, there are very strict rules surrounding applications for gift aid, but this doesn't mean that NASS branches cannot claim gift aid on donations or sponsorship money. The restrictions apply to the subscriptions collected from branch members.

This means if you were to organise a sponsored event then you would be able to claim gift aid on any money raised as long as the donors had filled in a gift aid form.

If you would like a reminder of what you can and can't claim please go to the branch support area of the website where you will find the NASS Guidelines on Gift Aid, Gift Aid Declaration forms and also NASS Sponsorship Forms.

<http://www.nass.co.uk/NASS/en/nass-branch-area/nass-branch-area/>

If you have any questions regarding gift aid and how to claim please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or email.

### **Timescales and deadlines**

We would like all branch treasurers to have completed and sent back their branch return forms and any copies of bank statements by

**Friday 30 January 2017**

This date will allow us to process the forms and get all the financial information ready for the NASS Trustee meeting in March 2017. All financial records will be officially published at the NASS AGM on 20 June 2017.

We would prefer it if forms were filled out and sent back electronically by email but we accept that it may be difficult to send electronic copies of bank statements and are happy to receive these in hard copy by post. If you have any queries or difficulties in filling out your branch return please contact me as soon as you can so that I can help you to find a solution.

### **Contact details**

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