



Dear friends,

The Excepting Regulations (or formally the Charities (Exception from Registration) Regulations 1996) mean that most Baptist churches with income below £100,000 per annum are not required to register with the Charity Commission. The Excepting Regulations are currently due to expire on 31 March 2021 and many of our churches have been concerned about having to go through the registration process, particularly as for many churches this will require adoption of a new constitution that would be acceptable to the Charity Commission (such as our Baptist Approved Governing Document).

We have received official notification that the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) intends to extend the Regulations by 10 years to give excepted charities time to prepare for registration and to allow the Charity Commission as much time as possible to register all excepted organisations in a coordinated way. Extending the Regulations beyond 31 March 2021 requires Parliamentary approval, through Secondary Legislation, which DCMS will seek in early 2021.

DCMS say that they are working together with the Charity Commission on a plan to phase more organisations onto the register in a manageable way over the extension period, however, we do not yet have any further details of this and are expecting to hear more in 2021.

I do hope that this news will reassure you that there is no immediate need for unregistered churches to be rushing to prepare for registration. Whilst the need to register may no longer be imminent, we continue to recommend that churches work towards adopting the Approved Governing Document (www.baptist.org.uk/resources/C04) as it is important for church charities to have a modern, comprehensive governing document to effectively manage the administration of the church charity.

Finally, you may wish to consider the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) structure for your church, which has no minimum income threshold requirement for registration with the Charity Commission. More details about churches, charities and incorporation can be read at www.baptist.org.uk/resources/C11 and we have an introduction to CIOs webinar available at https://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/532796/CIO_Webinar.aspx.

With kind regards

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