

LATEST NEWS FROM THE LEGAL AND OPERATIONS TEAM – SEPTEMBER 2023

ONLINE CIO TRAINING EVENT – TUESDAY 10 OCTOBER AT 10AM

The Baptists Together Legal and Operations Team and Anthony Collins LLP will be hosting training on Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs) on Tuesday 10 October from 10am until 1pm. This will be held online via Zoom.

Esther Campsall from Anthony Collins LLP will be presenting together with Caroline Sanderson, our Legal Services Manager. For further information and to book a place, please click here: www.baptist.org.uk/cioOct23. The closing date for bookings is Wednesday 4 October.

EQUALITY ACT 2010 – NEW L09 LEAFLETS

A reminder that our new, updated guidance for churches on the Equality Act 2010 and suite of 'L09' leaflets covering various aspects of church life, including recruitment, use of church goods, services and facilities, membership and leadership and the importance of a Christian ethos statement was published in July. You can find the new guidance and an introductory webinar for churches which sets the guidance in context here: www.baptist.org.uk/resources/L09. Any questions may be directed to L09@baptist.org.uk.

NEW OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE REGULATORY REFORM (FIRE SAFETY) ORDER 2005 FOR ALL RESPONSIBLE PERSONS

Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022 will come into force on 1 October 2023 and makes a number of changes to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. It is important that all those who are a Responsible Person for a building under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 understand the changes Section 156 introduces and are ready to comply with these changes from 1 October 2023. Further information is available here: [Fire safety responsibilities under Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-responsibilities-under-section-156-of-the-building-safety-act-2022)

In a Baptist church the Responsible Persons will be the charity trustees. You must now record your fire risk assessment in full (including all the findings) and the fire safety arrangements for your premises in all circumstances.

You should make available as much information as possible about fire safety in your premises. This new requirement replaces the previous requirement to record only the significant findings of the risk assessment. It also removes the previous limitations on the circumstances within which you are required to record both the risk assessment and the fire safety arrangements at your premises, such as only being required to record this information if there were five or more employees.

Responsible Persons are required to share any relevant fire safety information with incoming Responsible Persons to provide a continual record of fire safety information throughout a building's lifetime.

Guideline leaflet [L10 Health and Safety and Fire Precautions](#) has been updated.

NEW GOVERNMENT GUIDE – KEEPING SMALL NON-DOMESTIC PREMISES SAFE FROM FIRE

For smaller premises a new guide to 'making your small non-domestic premises safe from fire' is now available here: [Making your small non-domestic premises safe from fire - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-your-small-non-domestic-premises-safe-from-fire). This only applies where the area on any floor does not exceed 280m² and the maximum distance that anyone will need to walk from any point in the building to an exit to open air is not more than 25m.

Churches with larger premises should continue to refer to [Fire Safety Risk Assessment: small and medium places of assembly](#).

The link for the 'places of assembly' guidance in Wales is hosted by North Wales Fire and Rescue Service here: [Welsh guidance for places of assembly](#).

THERMAL INSULATION MEASURES AND INSURANCE COVER

Whether due to rising energy costs or for environmental reasons, churches may be considering improving the thermal efficiency of their buildings. However, any church that is considering using thermal insulation cladding or other thermal insulation systems, especially those involving expanded polystyrene, should first check with their insurer as to whether this will adversely affect their insurance cover.

We are aware that, depending on the type of thermal insulation system used, difficulties can be experienced in obtaining insurance cover. This might even mean that a church could be required to remove its new expanded polystyrene insulation cladding at further expense so that it can obtain insurance cover at a reasonable rate.

Accordingly, churches considering such measures should always speak to their insurer before contractually committing themselves to purchase any cladding or thermal installation system in order to find out whether insurance cover will still be available or whether their premiums will rise.

Please direct any follow-up questions to legal.ops@baptist.org.uk