



WATCH TOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

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July 30, 2002

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN BRITAIN

Re: Kingdom Hall Construction

Dear Brothers:

As you will note from the enclosed letter to be read to the congregation, fine progress has been made in constructing Kingdom Halls here in Britain. Your cooperation in this effort in the last several years is very much appreciated. Not only have many of you volunteered to assist the Regional Building Committees with their work but you have also loyally supported their activity and encouraged others to make themselves available to assist. You dear brothers are certainly to be commended for the fine work you have done and continue to do in this regard.

In some areas, Kingdom Hall construction has progressed so well that very few new Kingdom Halls are now needed, except to accommodate new congregations that are formed or for the few that rent community halls used by other organizations. A number of renovation projects are also worked into the schedule. Some Regional Building Committees in other parts of the world have been in a position to assist nearby countries in training some of their personnel. This has accelerated the Kingdom Hall construction programme.

Additionally, in times of disaster, such as floods, earthquakes, and hurricanes, members of Regional Building Committees and key personnel working with them have responded when the Service Committee of the Governing Body requested their assistance to repair Kingdom Halls and damaged homes of the brothers. Their readiness and willingness to volunteer on such occasions has been most encouraging and greatly appreciated.—Ps. 110:3; Col. 3:23, 24.

Indeed, it is gratifying to see how our brothers have supported the Kingdom Hall Fund arrangement, resulting in the advancement of true worship. (Isa. 54:3, 4) Yet, since lands with limited resources continue to have a need for more Kingdom Halls, your further assistance is needed in limiting Kingdom Hall construction in Britain to what is really needed. It continues to be a time for moderation in planning for the remodelling of existing Kingdom Halls and the construction of new ones in Britain so that it will be possible to channel more money into meeting critical needs in other countries.

What can you elders do to support this arrangement? Endeavour to keep your Kingdom Hall in good repair. By giving needed attention to maintaining your present Kingdom Hall, its lifetime can be lengthened, and this will help avoid a premature need for a replacement. All the elders must cooperate to make the care of the Kingdom Hall a priority. In this way, the building will continue to represent Jehovah properly in the community.

Carefully count the cost and carefully weigh the need before rushing to remodel your Kingdom Hall or seeking to build a new one. When renovation or new construction is needed, please limit this to what is necessary—even if you have sufficient funds on hand locally. A fine principle was stated in paragraph 11 of the insert in the February 1992 *Our Kingdom Ministry*: “Even though a congregation may have accumulated funds sufficient to include extra features [in

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its own Kingdom Hall] without seeking a loan, consideration should be given to using conventional designs and to building modestly. This makes any additional funds available for use in other theocratic endeavours. (*om* p. 61; 2 Cor. 8:14).”

Regional Building Committees are being asked to be mindful of economizing when aiding congregations in buying property, performing major renovations, or building new Kingdom Halls. Before deciding to renovate, for example, the question should be raised, Does an urgent need really exist, or is it simply a desire to upgrade or relocate an otherwise suitable facility? Consider whether this is really needed or whether existing Kingdom Halls can be used more efficiently. A single auditorium can often be used by three or four congregations.—See *Our Kingdom Ministry*, December 1990, page 3, paragraph 8.

Kingdom Hall designs, including finishes, should be modest and appropriate to the surroundings and should minimize labour-intensive details—in this way reducing construction time and simplifying maintenance. This was one of the prime objectives in instituting the Kingdom Hall Package. Your cooperation is essential to keep down overall costs and not deviate from standard Kingdom Hall designs. The need for much additional work is removed when congregations utilise the Kingdom Hall Package rather than insisting on their own preferences with regard to constructional detail.

This is not to suggest that congregations should seek outside financing for their Kingdom Halls. When construction is warranted and additional funds are needed, the elders may continue to request a loan from the Kingdom Hall Fund by obtaining a Kingdom Hall Loan Application (S-84) from the local Regional Building Committee. The regional committee also has instructions on how this is to be submitted and has volunteers assigned to assist the elders in completing the needed paperwork.

When undertaking construction at your Kingdom Hall, please give attention to enlisting full volunteer support of the local congregation(s). Of course, key personnel that usually work with the Regional Building Committee will supplement this. Health and Safety legislation means it is vital to ensure that all those used on the project have adequate and appropriate training. However, having volunteers from the local congregation(s) assist with the project fosters a sense of responsibility toward any new facility, including its continued upkeep and maintenance. In any case, operating and maintenance expenses inherent in the design selected should not exceed the collective means of the congregation(s) as reflected in the financial survey that is made along with the estimated budget.

We take this opportunity to commend you for your generous support of the Kingdom Hall Fund and all the activities of the theocratic organization. Please make this a matter of prayer to Jehovah, and encourage all in the congregation to think seriously on this important subject.

Be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watch Tower B. & J. Society
OF BRITAIN

c: Travelling Overseers
Regional Building Committees