



# WATCH TOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

THE RIDGEWAY LONDON NW7 1RN

TELEPHONE 020 8906 2211

T September 21, 2007

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Dear Brothers:

Re: Charity Commission, Annual Return 2007, and other Charity matters

Most of this letter concerns the work of the secretary, but it will be useful for all elders to be aware of the contents. At present, the Charity Commission is sending a letter to all congregations, advising that your annual form is now ready for completion on line. They give you the option of requesting a paper copy. You are at liberty to use either method. Those who have tried using the electronic version have found it to be very user-friendly. When ordering a paper version, you need to tick a box to indicate your level of income for the year. Please refer to our letter T:TSA September 26, 2005 if you are uncertain about what should be included as income. Whether using the electronic or paper version, you will find that almost all of the boxes have been pre-completed, and you have a facility to edit or change if necessary; such as to show the correct list of Trustees (Elders). The exceptions are as follows:

**Gross income and total expenditure:** You can obtain these figures from the Annual Report that was read to the congregation at your Annual General Meeting. Bear in mind that certain items can be excluded as explained in our letter of September 26, 2005.

**Activities:** This is an extra box that has not appeared on earlier forms. Here is the wording we suggest you write there:

“Arranging meetings for public worship, which includes Bible education and training in Christian living. Preaching the Christian message to the public within the congregation area. Distributing Bibles and other religious literature; also giving pastoral assistance to the congregation and the wider community. All of these services and facilities are provided without charge.”

The leaflet with the letter from the Charity Commission has a heading “Update Anytime.” It would be important to tell the Charity Commission promptly, if the contact address becomes invalid. If you wish, you can tell them right away, if an elder is removed and consequently is no longer a trustee. In the next business meeting minutes, it should be recorded that “On (date of removal) Mr. (name) ceased to be a Trustee of the congregation.” (No reason needs to be given). There may be a situation where an elder is not removed, but is declared bankrupt. In this case seek advice from the branch immediately, as explained in our letter LEA:LSA December 4, 1997, listed under “bankruptcy” in the “Index to Society letters.” In cases where an elder resigns (other than for reasons that would automatically disqualify him as a trustee), moves in, moves out, or dies, you could wait until the Annual Return and update the trustee list then.

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Final note to the secretary: We recommend you make a paper copy of the Annual Return and circulate it among the elders before submitting it. We hope you will find this helpful as you care for this legal responsibility. Thank you for your fine work in looking after your assignment as secretary.

Warm brotherly greetings,

*Watch Tower B. & J. Society*  
OF BRITAIN