

Autumn 2026

Ministries

Contributed by the Ministries team at Baptist House (ministries@baptist.org.uk). Members of the Ministries Team may be contacted through the Team's [contact page](#).

We are pleased to let you know that our guidance leaflets **X02 (Self Assessment Tax Returns for Ministers of Religion Holding Office)** and **X03 (Taxation Guidelines for Churches and Ministers)** have recently been reviewed and updated in consultation with our tax advisors.

These updated leaflets are now available on the Baptist Union website and can be accessed via our taxation resources page: [View Taxation Resources](#)

We encourage ministers and churches to make use of these updated materials when preparing tax returns and considering related matters and take this opportunity to remind you that **Ministers of Religion are required to submit a tax return annually**.

Alongside this, we are currently working with our tax advisors to understand the implications of upcoming **Benefits in Kind taxation reporting changes due to take effect from April 2027**.

There will be a phased rollout when specific benefits will transition to this mandatory system in April 2027 - most notably company cars, vans, fuel, and medical benefits. Other non-cash perks will generally phase in the following year (April 2028).

When looking into HMRC PAYE changes, Ministers of Religion as Office Holders are often treated as a special case.

It is possible that the basic PAYE tools offered by the HMRC will not be suitable for reporting these benefits in kind so churches may need to purchase software to do this or may wish to consider looking at providers that can assist with this.

We will provide further guidance in due course to help churches and ministers prepare for these changes.

**Legal and Operations**

Contributed by the Legal and Ops Team (Legal.Ops@baptist.org.uk)

Letting Residential Property in England

The Baptist Union of Great Britain's Legal & Operations Team has rewritten its guideline leaflet, PM04: 'Letting Residential Property in England' in light of the legal changes that came into effect on 1 May 2026 with the Renters' Rights Act 2025. It contains important information, including links to Government guidance.

All churches letting out (or intending to let out) residential property in England that is in trusteeship with one of the above-mentioned trust corporations are strongly advised to read the updated leaflet, if you have not already done so, a link to which [can be found here](#).

Responding to Data Protection Complaints in your Church

The [Data \(Use and Access\) Act 2025](#) has brought in some new responsibilities for organisations that handle personal data, including churches. Churches now need to make sure that complaints about data protection are received, acknowledged and handled carefully and without unnecessary delay.

What the law requires

You **must**:

- give people a way of making data protection complaints directly to the church;
- acknowledge receipt of complaints within 30 days of receiving them;
- without undue delay, take appropriate steps to respond to complaints, including making appropriate enquiries, and keep people informed; and
- without undue delay, tell people the outcome of their complaints.

Simple ways people can raise a concern

Each church can decide what will work best in its own setting. The important thing is that people are given a clear and accessible way to raise a data protection concern. For example, you might:

- provide a complaint form that people can submit to the church either electronically or in writing (e.g. by email or post);
- provide an email address for people to submit complaints to;
- allow people to make complaints over the phone; or
- give people a way to make complaints to you in person (e.g. if you don't have an online presence).

Helpful steps for churches

Alongside these legal duties, it may be helpful for churches to:

- Make information about how to complain easy to find and understand, for example by placing it clearly on your website and including it in your privacy notices.
- Identify a person or team to oversee data protection complaints so that concerns are handled consistently and with care.
- Help church leaders, staff and volunteers recognise a data protection complaint and know what to do if someone raises one.
- Keep a clear record of:
 - all complaints received
 - how each was handled
 - the outcome reached.

Churches do not need to create a separate complaints process just for data protection matters, as long as they can still meet the legal requirements. If your church already has a general complaints process, it may be possible to adapt it so that it also covers data protection concerns.

Further guidance is available from the Information Commissioner's Office [here](#).

If you have any queries regarding data protection, please do contact our team at dataprotection@baptist.org.uk.



Finance Team

Contributed by the Finance Team (Financeoffice@baptist.org.uk)

Baptist Together Deposit accounts

As a reminder, if you wish to find forms for withdrawals, applications and change of signature for deposit accounts as well as current interest rates these are available online on the website: [The Baptist Union of Great Britain/Deposit Accounts](#).

When sending the forms back to the finance team, please only send the forms to financeoffice@baptist.org.uk as either a .doc or .pdf document as this makes it easier for the finance team to respond to your requests quickly.

The statements for the accounts are sent out every quarter. We have recently taken a look at our processes and are hoping to send out the statements by the end of the 6th working day after the quarter end. Please try to avoid contacting the finance team before this point about your statement as this means time away from producing and sending the statements.

Also please remember to keep your treasurer details and their email address updated. Your Church Secretary will have been given login access to our database to make changes when necessary. Any difficulties in this area, please ask your Church Secretary to email churchupdate@baptist.org.uk. If you have not received your bank statement by the 7th working day after the quarter end – and cannot find it in your spam/junk email, please email us at financeoffice@baptist.org.uk and we will endeavour to resend the statement to you.

Resources available

Our finance leaflets and updated taxation guidelines are available on our website: [The Baptist Union of Great Britain : Finance](#)

The updated finance guidance is here: [The Baptist Union of Great Britain : Financial Guidance](#). This currently includes the updated standard stipend for 2027. We are hoping to upload the 2027 manse allowance by the beginning of October.

BUGB pays for ACAT (Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers) membership for all Church Treasurers. The website has lots of information about keeping church accounts and they offer training for Church Treasurers. Contact financeoffice@baptist.org.uk for information to sign up as a member of the Baptist Union block membership.

For current topics that other Baptist Church Treasurers are dealing with join the [Baptists Together Treasurers](#) Facebook page.



At Utility Aid, we stand with the causes that matter most, protecting our heritage and supporting places of worship. Behind every energy bill is a church, chapel, cathedral, or historic site working tirelessly to serve congregations, preserve history, and strengthen communities.

With almost 30 years of experience, we don't just provide services—we earn trust by delivering results.

Utility Aid exists to help charities and not-for-profit organisations source energy. We use our knowledge and experience. We anticipate and solve problems. Above all, everyone at Utility Aid is united by their desire to do more good for our stakeholders and that sets us apart in terms of how we are as a business.

How can we help you?

- [Energy switching](#)
- [Online switching \(for single meter sites\)](#)
- [Collective Purchasing](#)
- [Account management](#)
- [Bill checking](#)
- [Net zero and carbon reporting](#)

As a member of BUBG you can benefit from a free consultancy session with Utility Aid, whether you need support with understanding your bills, checking whether you are paying the correct VAT or if you need advice on starting your journey to Net Zero.

[Contact a member of the Utility Aid today!](#)



Risk management from Baptist Insurance.

Put simply, risk is the possibility of something going wrong and the impact it would have. For churches, it could be a loose paving slab causing a trip, a leaking roof damaging the building, or a busy event needing extra planning to keep people safe. Risk management can sometimes sound daunting, but it really comes down to taking sensible, practical steps to protect people, buildings and the mission and ministry they support.

Start with what could cause harm

Completing a risk assessment does not need to mean creating huge amounts of paperwork. Baptist Insurance's guidance encourages churches to think about what might cause harm, who could be affected, and whether reasonable precautions are already in place. For most small churches, this can be a straightforward walk around the building and grounds, noting hazards and agreeing simple actions. A busy church running regular community events may need more detailed planning, but the principle is the same: identify the risks, take sensible precautions, and make sure agreed actions happen.

Use the calendar as a prompt

The Baptist Insurance risk calendar sets out key themes across the year to help churches plan ahead – it links each month to practical checks to help risk management become part of everyday church life, rather than something only considered after an incident. Next month's theme covers slips and trips as leaves start to fall!

Churches can access a range of helpful guides, templates, tools and tips from Baptist Insurance covering areas such as health and safety, fire safety, security, community activities, and much more.

By building risk checks into the rhythm of the church year, it can help trustees, leaders and volunteers protect their congregations, welcome visitors with confidence, and keep their buildings available for worship, service and community life – you can find the calendar here: www.baptist-insurance.co.uk/risk-management/risk-calendar/.