

BULLETIN JULY 2010 - SECOND HELPING



As the publishing of my June bulletin was delayed until early July, I thought I would squeeze in a second helping this month.

Tip: if, like me, you have a low attention span, scroll down to the...And finally, which hopefully won't disappoint?

Daryl Martin

PLACES OF WORSHIP: SHOULD THEY BE REGISTERED?

My efforts to simplify a complex situation in my last bulletin just served to confuse people. As punishment, I have downloaded and studied the Updated Charities Act Implementation Plan. So to clarify: excepted charities with income over £100,000 per year should register with the Charity Commission; below that threshold and they have until October 2012 before they should begin the process. There may be other changes to this timetable. I also need to make it clear that the government is not expecting all places of worship to be registered; in any event, it's not the building which is registered; it is the charity which owns and runs it. If you need specific guidance [let me have your details](#) and I'll tell you where you stand.

EXPENSES:

Whilst too many MPs still haven't understood the extent to which public confidence has been damaged by their excessive claims, the charity sector generally sets a welcome example in these matters. Example: Barnardo's CEO, Martin Nairey, claimed about a third of what he was entitled to. He even made the charity an extra couple of thousand by gift aiding the sum he didn't claim. Well done that man and all the unsung thousands that do the same to a greater or lesser extent. Whether or not the fatcats still in denial will ever hang their heads in shame, I'm proud to be part of the charity sector that sets such a high standard of public behaviour. There have been examples of charity trustees milking their charity but my experience (we independently examine some hundreds of charities) is that this happily is rare. Transparency is good.

BUSINESS:

My fellow directors regularly gang up on me; this time they worry that I'm using this bulletin more as an extension of my blog than a company focused tool. So there goes: there is no doubt that the economy is in a bad way, and by all accounts

Daryl's Blog

Updated: 23/07/2010



Induction Programme for New Trustees:

We will agree a plan to induct new trustees and work with you to implement it.

Contact us for further details:
www.iel.org.uk



Charity HealthCheck

Does your Charity conform to the requirements of the Charity Commission?

Do your Operational Procedures need reviewing?

Contact us on 01243 555611 (ask for Rachel) or email support@iel.org.uk to find out how we can help.



Next year could get even worse; small businesses like ourselves, which the government is relying upon to trade us out of this mess, will find these times challenging and some will undoubtedly struggle to survive. This is a time when we need to pull together (both businesses and charities alike) and see if we can help each other. We are trying to do our bit: working to reduce costs, so we can keep our prices sharp and save you money. For us: if you find this bulletin helpful, perhaps you can bear us in mind when you have any work, or, recommend this bulletin to other people, so that we have a chance to win their business (if you are a charity and introduce a client to us, we will send you a donation).

RSK:

Recent developments in the men's ministry in my local church resulted in guys doing all sorts of things in the name of the church: going on walks, going to the cinema, curry evenings etc. When they started to get groups together to mess around in boats on the open sea, the trustees began to get a bit skittish. Reluctant as we were to spoil their fun, we asked our administrator to put together an 'Activity Group Risk Assessment'; which effectively killed off the activity (I think the men have made other arrangements, i.e. just getting together as groups of mates). It's a tough one; I'm reluctant to spoil anyone's fun, but if anything did go wrong, as a trustee I'd be quite rightly in the firing line. The Navy still haven't explained how they managed to lose a 14 year old cadet in the Solent a few months back, climbing rigging and not secured. If anyone should know how to manage risk at sea, they should. [Email us](#) if you want a copy of our risk assessment sheets.

DATA PROTECTION COMPLIANCE:

You can now get fined up to £500,000 for a serious breach, where damage or distress to individuals is caused. This is ironic because the serial offenders seem to be government departments. Nevertheless, once again, if they can't set a standard, it falls to us (heavy sigh and rolling of eyes). Here are some tips:

1. Make sure data protection compliance figures on an agenda at least annually.
2. Assign a trustee to be responsible; to ensure that data is adequately protected.
3. Ensure that any arrangements with 3rd parties is adequate.
4. Provide clear guidelines for data taken off site, emails, laptops etc, including encryption and passwords.
5. Make sure homeworkers have adequate protection, and check who else has access.
6. Remember any hardware taken off site for repair should be covered.
7. If you give away equipment surplus to requirements, make sure the data is removed.

Our supporters won't thank you if their details get into the wrong hands. [Email us](#) if you would like any further guidance on data protection compliance.

CHARITIES VAT BILL:

End of Year accounts, and Independent Examination:

Our services are fast, user friendly and cost effective. We can help with any preparation work needed, and help resolve any issues that may arise. [Contact us](#) for a quotation. Monthly payment option at NO EXTRA COST.



Charity Accounts Software:

The latest in charity accounts software, simple but powerful and comprehensive. Check out the [Paxton website](#) for a demo. Don't forget we are accredited trainers for Paxton so call us for a quotation on 01243 555611 (ask for Viv) or email support@iel.org.uk



NVM HR & Recruitment: Professional HR advice which is affordable, reliable and quick! Check out the [NVM](#) website.



The new VAT rate, I am told, will hit charities to the tune of £140m, making non-recoverable VAT for the sector £1.5b. These figures may be correct: who knows: no one even cares! The reality is beginning to hit home that we are all going to have to pay a very heavy price for the excesses of the last 10 years, where we have lived well beyond our means, and now not only do we have to live within our means but we have to pay down the debt which was allowed to build up. Charities are not exempt from this pain! I suppose we have to lobby as it's often the squeaky wheel that gets the grease, but what we should be applying ourselves to, is how to survive, how to grow, how to continue to provide services that will be needed more than ever. We need strong charities with good solid leadership, so no more moaning, lets get on with securing the future.

SIZE MATTER?

An interesting survey which came past my desk recently gave small charities some advantages over the big boys. Over half of those polled said that the big charities often wasted money but only 6% said this of small charities. 65% said that small charities were good at understanding the needs of their beneficiaries but only 35% said the same for big charities. These are perceptions only and probably off the mark in many cases, but they do point up some interesting thoughts: small charities can make their mark locally and be better thought of than the bigger national charities. Big swanky offices can work against the bigger charities, can have highly paid executives, and remote impersonal centralisation. Increasingly in these straitened times, it's the personal touch which will count, whether you are big or small. Play to your strengths, and make your size work in your favour.

BOGUS TELEPHONE CALLS:

Most days sometime mid afternoon I get call to tell me about an offer I can't refuse. They are getting more cunning these days: did I speak to your wife last week? They ask, 'she was very interested'. They often know my full name and far more about me than they should. They even know about my trustee responsibilities. The latest scam is for someone to ring you to tell you that you owe the Charity Commission a modest sum for advertising or other services. The CC recently put out a statement to say that they never ask for money for any of its services and any bogus calls should be reported to them and the police.

FACEBOOK:

A couple of cautionary tales. I have seen 2 situations where a page has been set up to act as a forum for people who are in disagreement. One was set up to oppose someone standing as an MP in the recent election. That person lost marginally; I wonder how many votes this website cost (If you searched FB for this person you went straight to the website set up by opponents). The other page was set up to highlight perceived financial issues of a church. There seem to be 2 dangers here: first that anyone with a grudge can damage someone else with real or imagined complaints, and secondly that we might as well be transparent if we do have skeletons in our particular closets. My rule is only ever to write kind things about other people (A great Facebook tip in [one of my recent blogs](#), if you are concerned about security).

NEW BUSINESS:

Company Secretary Service:

A number of Charities have already signed up to this new service. [Contact us](#) for details.



Gift Aid:

[Email Janice](#) if you need help on your gift aid claims or if you need envelopes for cash donations



Professional Christian Counselling Courses:

Do you work with others in a pastoral role?
Are listening skills central to your job?
Are you involved in counselling?
Do you want to develop your counselling skills?
Are you preparing for approaching regulation?
Contact us today:

www.barnabastraining.com

My daughter Ruth has started a new business and insists I give her a plug. Who would turn down a request from a favourite daughter? Best way to describe it is that it's a secretarial & concierge service. If you live in Sussex or Hants and are interested, [e-mail her](#) for a brochure.

ARE YOUR VEHICLES INSURED?

A anguished letter to Honest John (Daily Telegraph), from a chap whose car insurance was cancelled, without his knowledge! The police picked it up and he receives a huge fine, 6 points on his license, and his car was seized and crushed; all because a direct debit payment got missed. You can check for free that your vehicle/s is on the Motor Insurance Database (MID) at www.askmid.co.uk. Apparently, if your vehicle is not shown on the MID, the driver is at risk of being stopped by the police.

AND FINALLY... (being the main or only thing a lot of people read)

CHOCOLATE:

Chocolate: here today, gone today!

What I really need is love, but a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt! (Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds)

I have this theory that chocolate slows down the ageing process. It may not be true, but dare I take the chance.

There's more to life than chocolate, but not right now.

Put 'eat chocolate' on your to-do list each day. That way, you'll get at least one thing done.

Chocolate makes everyone smile; even bankers! (Ben Strohecker)

At the beginning, the Lord created chocolate, and he saw that it was good. Then he separated the light from the dark, and it was better.

Why don't they make white M&Ms? Because they'd enslave the black M&Ms, steal the red M&Ms' land, hunt the blue M&Ms to extinction, accuse the yellow M&Ms of obstructing trade, start a panic that the little green M&Ms' were invading earth, and complain that the brown M&Ms' were taking all their jobs.

I had a nice one from Mel Gibson who seems to have lost it a bit recently. 'After 20 years of marriage, I'm finally starting to scratch the surface of what women want; I think the answer lies somewhere between conversation and chocolate'.

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