

TRUSTEESHIP MATTERS

Trust Corporation Status

A Trust Corporation is a specific type of charity that has been granted trust corporation status by the Lord Chancellor under section 3 (i) of the Law of Property (Amendment) Act, 1926. Among other advantages, trust corporation status enables a corporate trustee to act alone, as sole trustee of charitable land and buildings.

Trusteeship of Chapels

The Grace Baptist Trust Corporation has been recognised as a Baptist Trust Corporation within the meaning of the Baptist and Congregational Trusts Act, 1951 and may be appointed a trustee of any Particular Baptist Church practising restricted communion. Churches appointing the Corporation as a trustee will not in future be faced with the necessity of finding a lot of other trustees (sometimes as many as twelve or thirteen), even if the trust deed requires it.

The Corporation is willing to act as trustee alongside local people or to act alone if required. In this way churches will not be faced with the difficulties that can sometimes arise when a church has only individual trustees – say if some of the trustees change their doctrinal position or refuse to act in a matter of importance. Furthermore, the difficulties that can arise when the last of the trustees has died or cannot be traced will not occur.

We have a programme for assisting churches of which the Corporation is a trustee by commissioning a survey of their premises and working with them to implement a structured programme of essential maintenance.

Appointing the Corporation

In the first instance the church officers should contact the Chief Executive who will ascertain whether the church's trusts and constitution permit the Corporation to be appointed as a trustee of the chapel and other properties. The request is then passed to the Council of Management for approval and a church members' meeting must be held to confirm the appointment.

Under normal circumstances the relevant deeds and documents are then passed to the Corporation's solicitors to ensure that all the legal documents are in order and to prepare the document appointing the Corporation as a trustee. The legal costs associated with the appointment are normally borne by the church but in cases of hardship the Corporation is prepared to consider a request for financial assistance.

Once the Corporation has been appointed as a trustee the deeds and documents are then retained for safe keeping in the Corporation's fire proof safe. This means that the documents are not only kept safe but are also readily available in the event of a query arising.

FS\TCS\02\11