



The  
United  
Reformed  
Church

# Help and Advice Group

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## Bulletin 27: COPYRIGHT ON THE WEB

The Help & Advice Group was set up by Synod in 2009, to support local churches in being informed and effective in their life and mission. The Group is made up of four members of local churches, together with administrative support from the Trust Officer. We are willing to try to provide specific advice or organise training days on particular topics. Please get in touch if you have questions or wish to suggest a training or discussion event.

This article is part of a series giving an overview of particular subjects of interest for local churches. We also circulate general updates from time to time. Bulletins will also be posted on the members' area of the website with direct links to other websites.

Where readers are directed to web-based resources, the Synod Office is willing to respond to reasonable requests for printed out information for readers without web access, although they may find it more satisfactory to follow up their interest through their local library's web access.

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### Copyright on the Web

Churches are warned to take care in what they publish on the worldwide web.

Earlier this year, an Anglican church uploaded a poem to its website, only to receive a demand for £7,000 compensation for breach of copyright. That particular case was eventually settled out of court for a lower sum, but was still a rather unwelcome surprise.

Copyright of course also applies to photographs and other images, and some image owners actively trawl the internet to check that their pictures are not being used without permission. The good news is that there are over 19 million freely usable images available on Wikimedia Commons: <http://commons.wikimedia.org>, and of course you can always take your own photographs, as long as you have permission where people are included.

An overview of copyright law can be found on the Government's Intellectual Property Office website: [www.ipo.gov.uk/c-basicfacts.pdf](http://www.ipo.gov.uk/c-basicfacts.pdf).

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