

Guide to using URC Church Update



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Introduction to URC Church Update

URC Church Update (Portal) is a web-based system whereby churches can view the information we hold about them and notify us of any changes *at any time of the year*.

The system is **also** used to enable churches to complete their Annual Return *once a year*. If you have not reviewed the two sections Church Information and People, you will not be able to enter your annual return.

To access URC Church Update please use the link <http://churchupdate.urc.org.uk>

We recommend using Mozilla, Firefox or Google Chrome as your browser, as we have noted people experiencing difficulties with Microsoft Edge.

An **email address** is used to gain access and needs to be registered with the URC Church Update portal and the URC Database. If you are unsure of the email address to use (Church or personal) please contact your Synod office who will advise you. If you do change your email address at any time you will need to re-register. Do not forward the 'Getting Started' email to another person if you are no longer the person whose responsibility is to use the portal. Please contact your Synod to make any of these changes.

If you are a new user, click on **Register** and you will receive an email to continue registration and set your password.

The screenshot shows the URC Church Update login and registration interface. At the top, it says 'Welcome to the United Reformed Church Church Update'. There are two main columns. The left column is for 'New User' registration, with a 'Register' button and a 'Reset your password?' link. The right column is for 'Existing User' login, with input fields for 'Email address' and 'Password', a 'Remember me' checkbox, and a 'Sign in' button.

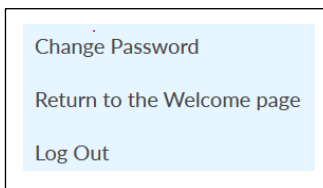
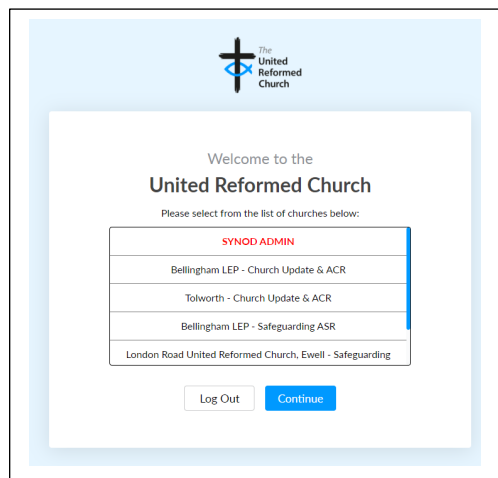
Having registered and as an existing user, to access the system you will need to enter your email address and your password and then click **Sign in**. If you have forgotten your password click on **Reset your password** and follow the on screen prompts

For security reasons the *remember me* option only lasts for 7 days before you are asked to login again.

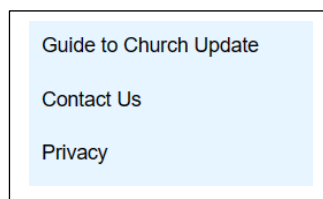
If you are no longer the person updating your Church information, please contact your synod. Never share your email address and password with anyone.

If you still experience problems, please email your Synod.

Once you have logged in you will see EITHER the list of churches you have access to and the level of access (select the church and click on **Continue**) OR you will be automatically taken to your church. If either the church or level of access is incorrect, please contact your Synod.



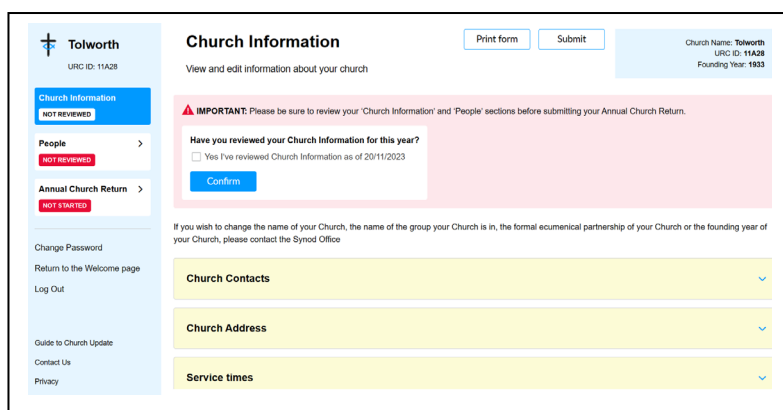
You can also change your password, return to the Welcome page or log out – use the link on the left-hand side of the screen.



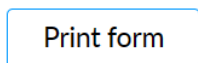
You can also link to the Guide to Church Update, Contact Us and the Privacy policy.

How to edit the information we hold about your church

- Having selected a church you will be taken to the **Church Information** section which will look something like this. We ask that you review this information at least once a year especially while the Annual Return period is open, but it is available throughout the year. You will not be able to submit your Annual Return unless you have reviewed this information.

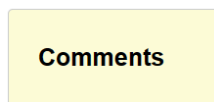


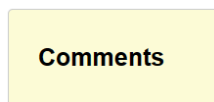
- If you would like to print the Church Information, click on the



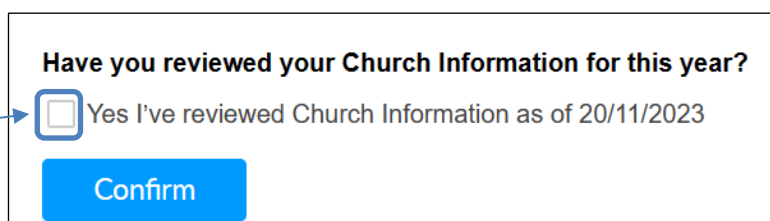
button.

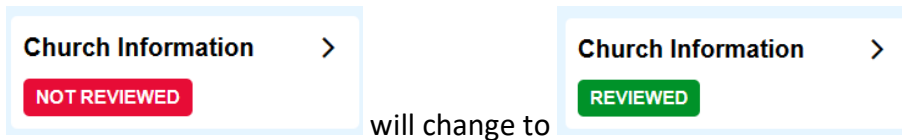
- Use the relevant down arrow on the right to open each section. If anything needs amending here click on **'Edit section'** button on the right, make the change and click **Save** (or **Cancel** to exit without making any changes).
- Please note that you are unable to edit the name of your church, church address, church group, formal ecumenical partnerships and founding year. If any of these are incorrect, please email your Synod to let them know.



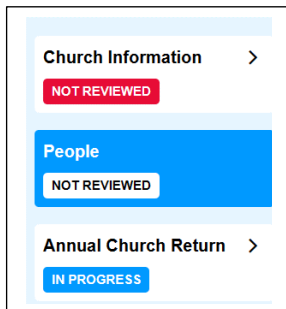
- If you would like to leave any comments, please use the  area, please start your comment with today's date.

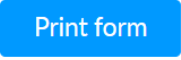
- When you have reviewed the Church Information please tick the box and click **Confirm**





How to edit the information we hold about people in key roles in your church




- Now move to the **People** section using the link on the left-hand side. We ask that you review this information at least once a year especially while the Annual Return period is open, but it is available throughout the year. You will not be able to submit your Annual Return unless you have reviewed this information.
 - If you are using a tablet or phone this may appear as a menu icon on the top right next to your church name. When you click on the item it may / will be highlighted.
- If you would like a list of the People currently listed in key roles in your church, click on the  button.
 - This section is where you tell us about changes to people in key roles.
The roles we need to know about are as follows:
 - Secretary (can have more than one) *
 - Assistant Secretary
 - Treasurer *
 - Assistant Treasurer
 - Church Elder [Serving Elders only] *
 - Safeguarding Co-Ordinator – Primary Contact *
 - Safeguarding Co-Ordinator – Deputy/Joint
 - DBS Verifier
 - Children and Youth contact – Primary Contact
 - Children and Youth contact - Deputy/Joint
 - Synod representative (1) *
 - Synod representative (2) (NB a church can have two representatives if it has more than 200 members)
 - Administrator
 - Church lettings contact
 - Commitment for Life Link person
 - Minute Secretary
 - Property Contact
 - Pulpit Secretary

[For an explanation of what we mean by these roles please see [Appendix 1](#)].

Asterix * denotes a mandatory role and a contact must be entered otherwise you will not be able to proceed. ***Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) on how to add a non-named person to a mandatory role.***

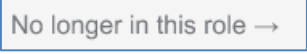
- To view the people listed at a role, click on the down arrow to the right of the role name.

- To view the information, we hold about each person click  next to their name.

- To view the address and contact information, click on the down arrow to the right of their name.

- To edit their address or other contact details please click on the relevant sections down arrow and use the 'Edit' button on the right, make the change and click **Save** (or **Cancel** to exit without making any changes).

- To let us know that any of these people are no longer in the role listed

Click . You will be asked to provide the date when the role ended. If the exact date is not known please use today's date.

- You can also let us know that they are fulfilling another role by following the on-screen prompts.

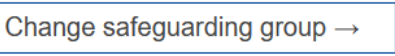
- For Church Secretaries and Treasurers lets us know of their permissions to print their information in the URC Yearbook and Synod Yearbook, please click on the permission section down arrow and use the 'Edit' button on the right, make the change and click **Save** (or **Cancel** to exit without making any changes).

Please ensure you give **permission to print to at least one** phone number and/or email for URC Yearbook and Synod Yearbook / Handbook

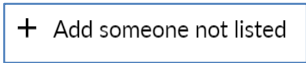
- To let us know that a new person is in a role listed, scroll to the relevant Role section and click **Add a new contact for this role**

Choose the appropriate person from the Dropdown list and give their start-date, click **Save**


- If you are adding a new Church Safeguarding Coordinator (Primary or Deputy/Joint), let us know of their safeguarding group

Click on , chose from the drop down list, click **Continue** and click **Save** (or **Cancel** to exit without making any changes).

OR

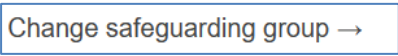
- To add someone who is not currently listed click  fill in the relevant fields, click **Add** and make sure you add their start date and click **Save** (or **Cancel** to exit without making any changes).

- If you are adding a new Church Secretary or Treasurer, let us know of their permissions to print their information in the URC yearbook and Synod Yearbook.

Click on , click on the permission section down arrow and use the 'Edit' button on the right, make the change and click **Save** (or **Cancel** to exit without making any changes).

Please ensure you give **permission to print to at least one** phone number and/or email for URC Yearbook and Synod Yearbook / Handbook

- If you are adding a new Church Safeguarding Coordinator (Primary or Deputy/Joint), let us know of their safeguarding group

Click on , chose from the drop down list, click **Continue** and click **Save** (or **Cancel** to exit without making any changes).

- If you see this error message, click **OK** and contact your Synod and they will be able to add the person, their role and start date to the URC database for you.

Something went wrong

A record was not created because a duplicate record is already on the URC database, please contact your Synod Office for help.

- At **Confirm** you will asked to consent and confirm data protection statements.

You will not be able to confirm your changes if you do not have someone listed in one of the mandatory roles. This means that the system will not allow you **not** to have someone listed in these role.

- When you have reviewed the People please tick the box and click **Confirm**

Have you reviewed your People for this year?

Yes I've reviewed People as of 20/11/2023

People >

NOT REVIEWED

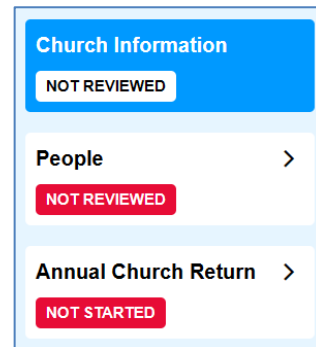
will change to

People >

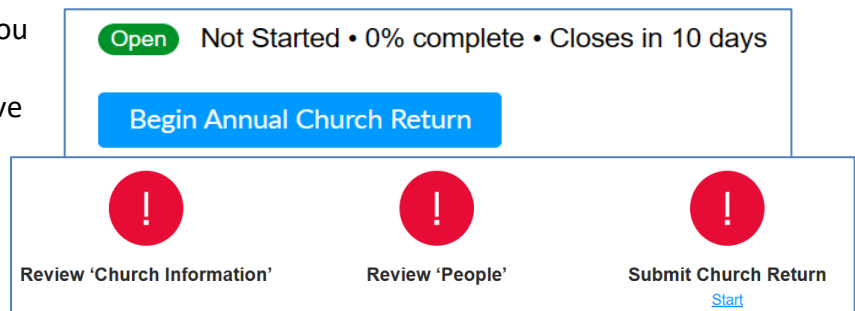
REVIEWED

Completing your Annual Return

- During the “Annual Returns” period (normally January and February) the option to complete your Annual Return will be visible. Access this from the menu on the left-hand side.



On the Annual Return page you can see how much you have completed, how long you have before the system closes and whether you have reviewed Church Information and People sections of the portal.



Also on this page you are able to view the statistics we hold from previous years. Click on [Previous Years](#)

- If you want to print a blank copy of the return, click [Print Form](#)
- Click [Begin Annual Church Return](#) to get started!

If you have started and saved this, the box will say

[Continue Annual Church Return](#)

- There are 8 sections which you can work through in **any** order. You should be able to view on the right hand side of the screen the last set of figures you entered. Please note that if you have not completed an Annual Return for some time these figures may be out-of-date. There are pop-up boxes which explain what we are looking for, click on the question mark

[About this figure](#)

- Follow the instructions on the pages and you can enter the information in any order and move on by clicking [Save & Continue](#)

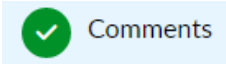


- The minus sign means that the section is incomplete. **The returns cannot be submitted until all fields have been completed. “0” is a valid numerical entry.**

[Save & Exit](#)

- You can [Save & Exit](#) at any time during your entering of the information

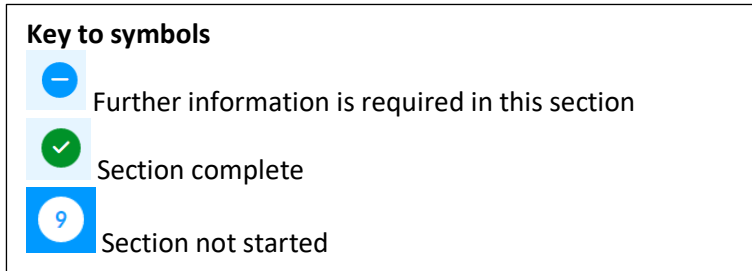
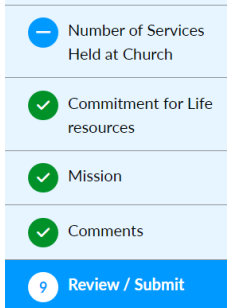
Comments




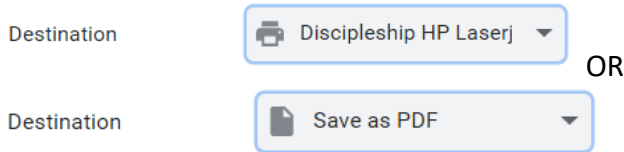
- If you would like to leave us a comment about the information you have entered please use the comment section

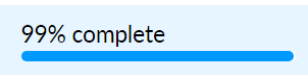
Review

- The final stage is the 'Review' stage which gives you the opportunity to review (and edit if necessary) all the information we hold for your church.



- You are able to print or save a copy of your entries by clicking  and changing the destination to your local printer OR Save as PDF in the Print screen, as below. Note that once you have submitted your Annual Church Return you will not be able to print or save a copy of the completed return.



- Your Return will remain at  until you click the submit button
- You may see this message:

Please ensure you have taken a copy of the annual church return information before submitting by clicking the print button at the top of the page. **You have not checked your Church Information or People sections this year. Please visit these sections to ensure that the information is correct before submitting the Annual Church Return.**

Click **Save and Exit**. Please return to Church Information and People sections to ensure that the information is correct. When you have you will be able to submit your annual church return for this year.

- Confirmation of Submission
You will be asked to confirm that you have reviewed the Church Information and People sections, if you have please tick the box and **Confirm submission**

Submit Annual Church Return ×

Are you sure you want to submit your Annual Church Return?
Once submitted, you will need to contact the Synod Office to make any changes.

Please ensure your Church Information & People sections are up to date before submitting.

I confirm that I have reviewed my Church Information & People sections & that they are up to date.

[Confirm submission](#) [Cancel](#)

- At the bottom of the page is the **Submit Annual Return** button which you need to click in order to submit the return to us.

Please do not forget to click the **Submit Annual Return** button.

Appendix 1: Roles in Church Update

Church Secretary - mandatory

A church secretary is also the primary contact for the church. A church may have joint church secretaries and you can add both names to this section. You **must** have someone listed in this role in order to submit your return. If there is no named person undertaking this role, please enter a new person with the following information:

Title: Mx
Name: The Church
Surname: Secretary (URC ID) e.g. **Secretary (01A01)**.
You will find your church URC ID in the top left-hand corner of your screen

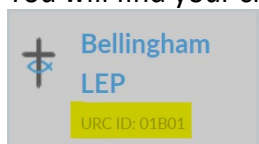


Address: c/o the church name and address
Telephone: enter the church phone number where available if no number is available add your Synod Office phone number
Email: enter the generic church email address where available

Church Treasurer - mandatory

The key person to contact regarding church finances. You **must** have someone listed in this role in order to submit your return. If there is no named person undertaking this role, please enter a new person with the following information:

Name: The Church
Surname: Treasurer (URC ID) e.g. **Treasurer (01A01)**
You will find your church URC ID in the top left-hand corner of your screen



Address: c/o the church name and address
Telephone: enter the church phone number where available if no number is available add your Synod Office phone number
Email: enter the generic church email address where available

Safeguarding Coordinator - Lead / Primary Contact - mandatory

The person appointed by the Church Meeting to oversee safeguarding at the church. You **must** have someone listed in this role in order to submit your return. If there is no named person undertaking this role, please enter a new person with the following information:

Name: The Church
Surname: Safeguarding Coordinator (URC ID) e.g. **Safeguarding Coordinator (01A01)**
You will find your church URC ID in the top left-hand corner of your screen



Address: c/o the church name and address
Telephone: enter the church phone number where available if no number is available add your Synod Office phone number
Email: enter the generic church email address where available

Church Elder (Serving) - mandatory

The person appointed by the Church Meeting to serve as an Elder. You **must** have at least one named person in the role to submit your return.

Synod representative (1) - mandatory – The church representative that can attend Synod meetings. There **must** be a named person in the role to submit your return

Synod representative (2) a church can have two representatives if it has more than 200 members

Safeguarding Coordinator - Deputy/Joint

The person appointed by the Church Meeting to assist with overseeing safeguarding at the church

Assistant Secretary

The person who deputises/assists the Church Secretary

Assistant Treasurer

The person who deputises/assists the Church Treasurer

DBS/PVG local church verifier

The person(s) appointed by the Church Meeting to carry disclosure checks

Children and Youth Work Elder – primary contact

The key person to contact regarding Children and Youth work

Children and Youth Work Elder - deputy/joint

Where there is a second person involved in Children and Youth work

Administrator

The person who carries out most of the administrative tasks

Commitment for Life Link person

The person who is the main contact for Commitment for Life

Lettings contact

The person with responsibility for letting accommodation on behalf of the church

Minute Secretary

The person who takes minutes at the church and Elders' meetings

Property Contact

The person in charge of the church property

Church Pulpit Supply Secretary

The person fulfilling the pulpit supply role