

## **Sue Thorn Consulting Ltd - briefing**

### **What the law says companies/charities need to state on their business documents, web sites, and business premises**

#### **Business documents**

This heading comprises not just letterhead, but also invoices, calls for nominations, ballot papers, newsletters and so on.

According to English law, you need to state the following on all of these:

1. The company's registered name
2. Where in the UK the company is registered
3. The company's registered number
4. The company's registered address
5. If your society's name does not include the word 'limited', you need to make clear that it is indeed a limited company; otherwise, people might reasonably think they had greater redress than they actually do.
6. If charitable status is not made abundantly clear in a charity's name (eg 'Great Ormond Street Charity'), then documents must state that it is a charity. It is good practice to state the charity number.

Thus, the text block at the base of your letterhead might read:

Company limited by guarantee. Registered in England number 01020304.

Charity number 125689. Registered address as above.

If you include the name of any of your directors on your business documents, then you must include all directors. So, for example, it is not acceptable just to list key officers.

Please note that there may be different rules for companies and charities registered outside of England and Wales.

#### **Web sites**

The information above must be shown on a company's web sites. It is often included on the home page or contacts page.

#### **Business premises**

All companies must have their name displayed at their business premises. The public are also entitled to enter and view certain documents such as the register of members during business hours. This is why directors' home addresses are not suitable as registered offices. Where a society is too small to have its own premises, this service can usually be provided by its association management company, solicitor or auditor. There is sometimes a small fee for this.

Sue Thorn  
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