



# Annual Review 2015



## President's Report to the AGM, 29 June 2015



*Phil Mitchell hands over  
to Helen Scourfield*

Having attended the AGM expecting to be elected as junior Vice President, you can only imagine my surprise at being launched into the position of President!

### **In at the deep end**

I have to admit that the task was a bit daunting initially: We had just lost our stalwart organiser extraordinaire, Helen Crute, and my first task was to appoint a new administrator. We decided to appoint Adam Crute and I would like to extend my thanks to him for all of his hard work and support over the last year. We had our first meeting and - I'm sure Adam won't mind me saying - both felt a bit like fish out of water! Anyway, we have gradually got our heads around things and I now feel like the society is moving in the right direction.

## Events

### **Annual Dinner, 6 March 2015**

The Annual Dinner was a great success, thanks largely to Nicola Neilson who performed an amazing job in making everything run smoothly. I genuinely don't know what we would do without Nicola!



*Hero of the Dinner, Nicola Neilson, and guest*

My chosen charity was the Halo Project and, thanks to the generosity of the attendees, we raised over £1700 for them. The charity is fairly new and needs all the support it can get. The Senior Vice President's speech went down very well and I felt that the night had a fun, relaxed feel to it (Nicola may not feel like that!).



*The President addressing guests  
at the Annual Dinner*

### **President's & Secretaries Conference, 8-9 May 2015**

I recently attended the Presidents and Secretaries Conference at The Law Society. I had a thoroughly enjoyable two days, meeting other presidents from societies large and small, and absorbing many new ideas for promoting and advancing TVLS. Having found such inspiration at the Conference I feel it a shame that the event occurred so close to the end of my term, thereby limiting my opportunities to put new ideas into practice.

### **Breakfast Networking Event, 16 June 2015**

We are in an ever changing profession and the pressures of work can take their toll at times, and so one thing that I am passionate about is creating a support network for all lawyers, junior and senior. It is important for anyone in practice to know that they have a network of people around them to provide support and advice

To that end I would like to thank Chris Noon for organising a breakfast networking event at the Redworth Hall Hotel on the 16th June.

The logo for TVLS, featuring the letters 'T', 'V', 'L', and 'S' in a stylized, handwritten font. The 'V' is green and the 'L' is blue.

The event was very successful, attracting potential new members, and providing an opportunity to have an informal chat to other members. We are going to organise more such events, in the South Durham area as well as on Teesside.

The event was kindly sponsored by Wesleyan and I am extremely grateful for their support, and for Chris' and Adam's hard work in organising the event.

### **Judicial Appointments**

Like my predecessor Phil, I seemed to hit a year of new Judicial Appointments and retirements, speaking at four ceremonies. These were to welcome two district judges and to say goodbye to District Judge Hall and His Honour Judge Walford, who both retired this year. It is always sad to lose such experienced judges but I wish them a long and happy retirement. (Judge Hall sent me a postcard from Bermuda so I think it's fair to say that he's already enjoying his retirement!)

### **Finally**

I would like to thank the Education & Training committee and my fellow Council members for their hard work and support over the last 12 months.

It has been both a pleasure and an honour to represent the profession in the Tees Valley area, and I have thoroughly enjoyed my term as President.

*Helen Scourfield  
President  
June 2015*



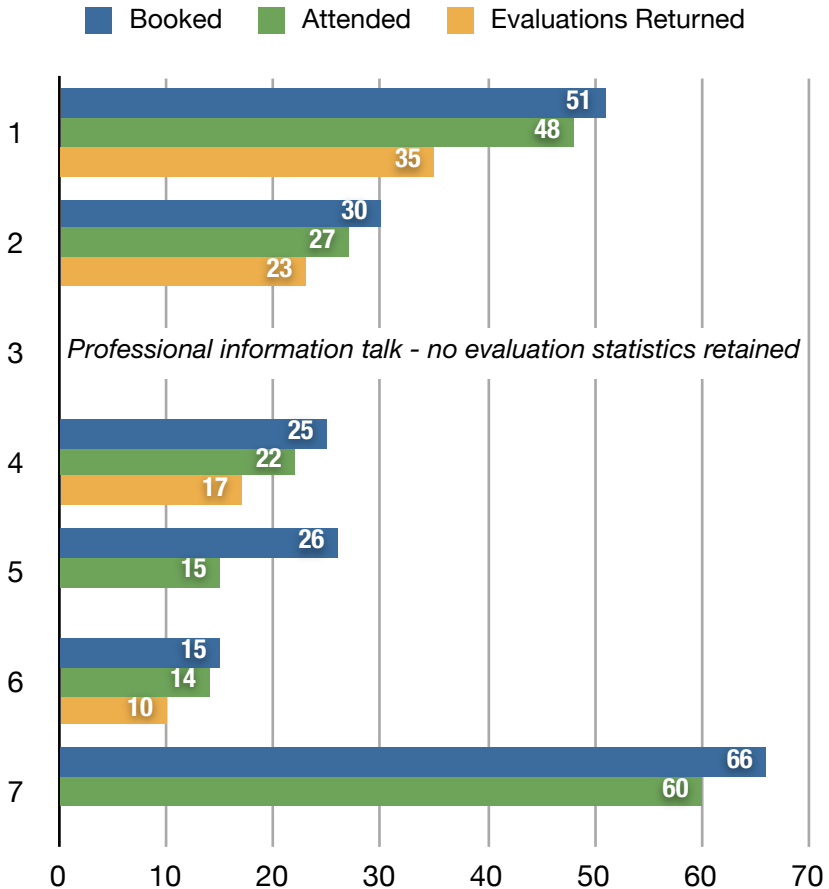
# Education and Training Committee

**Chairman:** Geoff Cruickshank

**Co-ordinator:** Geoffrey Crute

## CPD Seminars

During 2014, 7 events were organised, as follows:



1. Registration Fraud - an insight into Land Registry Practice

Francis Clough  
Alison Barker  
(Land Registry)

2. Property risks from flooding to fracking

Northumbrian Water  
Solutions Limited

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 3. Change & Surviving Change                  | Mark Stobbs,<br>Director of Legal<br>Policy, the Law<br>Society        |
| 4. Costs after Jackson - the new costs regime | James Marwick<br>Andrew Crammond<br>(Trinity Chambers)                 |
| 5. Training for Tomorrow                      | Consultation event<br>on changes to<br>training and CPD<br>regulations |
| 6. Property Workshop & ITPA Update            | Stephanie Jarrom<br>Matthew Maddison<br>(Enterprise Chambers)          |
| 7. An evening with His Honour Judge Taylor    | HHJ Taylor   |

### **Changes to the Programme**

Members will note that the programme has been broader-based this year. This reflects the E & T Committee's deliberations and proposals in addressing the changes to both the Training Regulations for qualification as a Solicitor, and the CPD regulations for those who are regulated through the SRA (see further below).

### **Improved Attendance**

It can be seen that the programme has in the main been well-supported, although in terms of planning "what people want" the Committee is still short of meaningful input from potential customers. Now that membership is available to all regulated legal practitioners – whether solicitors or not – and their trainees, there is an obvious need for greater engagement with such a larger potential audience.



Almost 200 attendances have been attained in the year under review – an

increase of two-thirds on the previous year. This may be some indication that the Committee's strategy – now approved by Council – for adapting to the current changes is finding favour. The increased revenue that this has generated has enabled us to present two events at a flat-rate fee of £20 as well as maintaining the “normal” seminar fee level which has been in being for several years.

### **Attendee Feedback**

Evaluations remain positive, with many attendees offering additional critical comment which does help future programme planning. It also remains the case that interest is generated by the topic rather than pre-knowledge or reputation of the speaker, hence the need for constructive suggestion and feed-back. Under the forthcoming CPD arrangements it will be essential that we can learn of people's personal training requirements in order to plan a programme which has relevance to people's training needs.

### **Plans for 2015**

Whilst the Committee has decided to maintain a points-based approach for the 2015/2016 training year, it is likely that there will be more, shorter, training events arranged at different venues around the sub-region and on shorter notice so as to be more topical.

The Committee will be seeking the active involvement of a number of the Society's members in bringing forward information which will support the changes which will be introduced over the next year. Also to be considered is the support that the Society can and should be giving to trainees and their firms under the 2014 Training Regulations. Members will be aware that close scrutiny by the SRA of the training process has now gone, and that the responsibility for ensuring the quality and number of future entrants into the profession rests squarely with



present practitioners. An additional challenge for the committee will be to familiarise itself with the changes being made by other regulated legal providers, such as the bar and the CILEX, so that what the Society offers has relevance there as well.

### **Get Involved!**

As always, the Education & Training Committee would welcome to the committee anyone with an interest in developing training opportunities for lawyer of all persuasions within the region, and anyone with such an interest should contact the E & T Co-ordinator either direct or via the Society's Administrator. Over the year under review the work of the Committee has been refreshed by people who have joined it during that period – but there is certainly room for wider interests to be represented.

*Geoffrey Crute  
E&T Co-ordinator  
June 2015*

### **New Contact Details**

The Society's postal address and phone number have changed. Please update your records with our new address:

**The Administrator  
Tees Valley Law Society  
2 Larkin Close  
Crook  
DL15 9FP**

**Tel:** 07762 307515

**Email:** adam@tvls.org.uk

**NB:** *The old PO Box is no longer in existence, and any mail sent to that address will not reach us.*

