



Present

In-Person: Coralie McKeivor (**CM**); Helen Read (**HER**); Stuart Henry (**SH**); Ben Hanham (**BH**); Rachel Fisher (**RF**); Salma Maqsood (**SM**); Sabeena Pirooz (**SP**); Huw Ponting (**HP**); Gabrielle Laurin; Robert Rawle (on behalf of Accountants Milsted Langdon)

Virtually: Clair Ponting, Jo Campbell, Francesca Rogers, James Woodburn, Leon Smith, Rachel Wood, Chris Bull

Apologies: Bryony Montandon, India Jenkins, Ryan Williams, Megan Jefferies, Hannah Coton-Smith

Proxies: 8 forms:

	In favour of:
Megan Jefferies, Thrings	CM
Leon Smith, DAC Beachcroft	CM
Lisa Whelan, Irwin Mitchell	CM
Aoife Hopkins, Irwin Mitchell	CM
Hannah Coton-Smith, Irwin Mitchell	CM
Ryan Williams, Simmons & Simmons	CM
Sarah Marchant, Burges Salmon	CM
Ben Holt, VWV	CM

1. Welcome, Introductions and Receiving Apologies

BH opened the meeting at 6.00pm and thanked all for coming to our 155th AGM. With the number of people in attendance the meeting was quorate, and could proceed.

Apologies as above.

2. Minutes of the 154th Annual General Meeting held on 21st November 2024

The draft minutes having been posted along with the notice of this AGM. No comments arising from these:

Proposed: SH Seconded: CM Voted: ALL CARRIED

Motion carried and minutes adopted.

3. Report of the Council (including President and Honorary Secretary's Reports)

President's Report

CM reading out report.

A copy of the President's Report as delivered on the evening is below at Appendix 1. The President's report was not circulated in advance.

The Activity Report also read out and forms part of the President's Report is also included at Appendix 1.

ROUND OF APPLAUSE

Honorary Secretary's Report

A copy of the Report of the Honorary Secretary is below at Appendix 2. The Honorary Secretary's report was not circulated in advance. There were no questions regarding this report.

ROUND OF APPLAUSE

4. **Honorary Treasurer's Report**

A copy of the Report of the Honorary Treasurer is below at Appendix 3. The Honorary Treasurer's Report was not circulated in advance. There were no questions regarding this report.

Robert Rawle of Milsted Langdon gave a brief report of the Accounts. RR offered to take questions from the floor - none posed.

ROUND OF APPLAUSE

5. **Appointment of Milsted Langdon LLP as the Society's Accountants**

Robert Rawle from Milsted Langdon was in attendance at the meeting. Milsted Langdon were pleased to accept the appointment as Accountants to the Society and are looking forward to working with the Society for the next 12 months.

Proposed: SH

Seconded: CM

Voted: All CARRIED

6. **The Election of:**

BH going through the election as follows:-

- Honorary Secretary
Ben Hanham, TLT
Proposed: HER Seconded: CLP Voted: All CARRIED
- Honorary Treasurer
Rachel Fisher, Stowe Family Law
Proposed: BH Seconded: CLP Voted: All CARRIED
- Senior Vice-President
Sabeena Pirooz, Thompsons
Proposed: BH Seconded: CLP Voted: All CARRIED

- President
Salma Maqsood
Proposed: BH Seconded: CLP Voted: All CARRIED

7. The Investiture of the new President of the Society

CM placing the Presidential chain of office over SM's head and inviting the new President to continue the meeting starting with a speech attached below at Appendix 4.

ROUND OF APPLAUSE

8. Any Other Business

SM asking if there was any other business.

None arising.

Meeting closed at 6.35pm

**BRISTOL LAW SOCIETY 155TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER
2025 AT 6PM AT THE OFFICE OF FREETHS, 3RD FLOOR, AURORA, FINZELS REACH,
COUNTERSLIP, BRISTOL, BS1 6EA AND VIRTUALLY VIA TEAMS**

REPORTS

OF

REPORT OF THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT, CORALIE McKEIVOR (Appendix 1)

HONORARY SECRETARY, BEN HANHAM (Appendix 2)

HONORARY TREASURER, RACHEL FISHER (Appendix 3)

REPORT OF THE INCOMING PRESIDENT, SALMA MAQSOOD (Appendix 4)

BRISTOL LAW SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025
OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Good evening, everyone, and thank you for joining us today.

It is with immense gratitude and excitement that I accept the honour of serving as your President. I first joined Bristol Law Society as a council member 10 years ago and I never thought I would be taking on the role of President. To be entrusted with this role is not only a privilege but also an opportunity to contribute to the legacy of excellence that defines Bristol Law Society. BLS is a society steeped in local history, collaboration, and a commitment to the legal profession. To be part of this journey is both inspiring and humbling.

As we've already heard this evening, it's been a great year, and the society continues to go from strength to strength.

As we look to the year ahead, my vision is clear: to strengthen our community, to collaborate and celebrate our shared achievements, and ensure that our profession remains inclusive, innovative, and impactful.

I want to continue building bridges and strengthening our community –within our city and beyond including collaboration with local law societies, local businesses and other professional organisations. I am particularly excited to expand on existing initiatives that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, ensuring our profession reflects the communities we serve. As well as Bristol + Bath Legal Tech.

As many of you know, we formally introduced our committee structure in 23/24 and one of my primary goals is to ensure that Bristol Law Society and our members take full advantage of the opportunities that this offers us. There is a lot I would love to do, and a year is simply not a lot of time, but I hope that the council, committees and members can collaborate and work together to achieve more and help promote the legal sector in Bristol.

I want to take the opportunity to thank our outgoing president, Stuart Henry for all his efforts over the past year and I hope to continue building on the progress you have made as well as Edd and Erin as our outgoing past presidents who will be stepping down from the executive.

Finally, I want to thank each of you—our council, committee, members, partners, and supporters and Clair and Helen. Our strength lies in our unity and shared purpose. Let us make this year one of bold initiatives, meaningful connections, and lasting impact.

Here's to a fantastic year ahead!

Thank you.

Coralie McKeivor
President 2024/25
18 November 2025

PRESIDENTIAL REPORT 2024/25 **DECEMBER 2024-NOVEMBER 2025**

Key BLS Business Projects

-  Re-brand of Annual Awards Dinner to Bristol Legal Awards
-  Further working on Council committees
-  Further work on CRM to enable to start using - testing of events which threw up anomalies that required to be looked into
-  Ongoing weekly webinars/training - including 3 conferences the return of the quiz and summer party

Council Meetings

-  11 council meetings (5 in person, 6 online)
-  Exec meetings

Obituaries

-  Robert Bourns, 23 June 2025, aged 69, was president 2005/06, Memorial service on 25 July at Clifton Cathedral

Webinars and Events

-  19 webinars (including series with Quiss and Nicola Green on Menopause) - 3 next week not included in figures
-  11 in-person events incl Quiz, 3 conferences, Managing Partners Dinner and Battle of the Bands
-  Bristol Legal Awards, 6 November sell out of 428
-  2 Managing Partner/Senior Leaders forum online and Managing Partners Dinner in person
-  4 Collaboration events including Bristol Legal Walk, PNLA Conference
-  4 ESSWN events
-  Joint V meetings - Liverpool and Birmingham

Charity of the Year, Estimated Raised:

Young Lives vs Cancer	
Battle of the Bands:	2,000.00
BLA:	Circa 6,700.00
Easyfundraising	30.00
Total <u>£ 8,700.00</u>	

Key Sponsors

All sponsors remained the same except for the below new sponsors.

NEW

JM Finn
SOS Legal
Forsyte
Wilson & Roe (BLA only)

Honorary Secretary Report to AGM - 18 November 2025

Past Presidents

This also marks the end of the presidential cycle for our current past president.

- Stuart Henry

We also thank him for their service and contributions.

Nominations for 2024/25

Nominations for Executive Officers

President: Salma Maqsood (Thrings)

Senior Vice President: Sabeena Pirooz

Honorary Treasurer: Rachel Fisher (Stowe Family Law)

Honorary Secretary: Benjamin Hanham (TLT LLP)

Immediate Past President – Coralie McKeivor (Freeths LLP)

Membership

Corporate Members:

3PB

Albion Chambers

Ashfords

Barcan + Kirby

Beale & Co

Bevan Brittan

Burges Salmon

Clarke Willmott

CMS

DAC Beachcroft

Foot Anstey (including Enable Law)

Freeths LLP

Fussell Wright

Guildhall Chambers

Irwin Mitchell Solicitors

Knights

Lyons Davidson

Marc White & Co

Michelmores

No.5 Barristers Chambers

Old Square Chambers

Osborne Clarke

Paragon Costs Solutions

Queen Square Chambers

RWK Goodman

Shakespeare Martineau

Simmons & Simmons LLP

St John's Chambers

Stone King
The Family Law Practice
Thrings
TLT Solicitors
Unity Street Chambers
VWV
Wards Solicitors
Womble Bond Dickinson

New Corporate Members for 2024/25:

RPC - February 2025
Watkins - August 2025
Thompsons - August 2025

In addition to our corporate members, I am pleased to report that this year we have been joined by **10** Full members and 42 student members.

Ben Hanham
Honorary Secretary
18 November 2025

HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2025

Executive Summary

1. The financial year end for Bristol Law Society is 30 November. The published accounts are for the year to 30 November 2024. Copies have been circulated.

2023/24

Actuals

2. The Society made a profit before tax of £5,275 as stated in the accounts compared with a profit before tax of £25,318 in 2023.
3. Income was £200,964 as against £208,966 in the preceding year.
4. Income profile for 23/24 includes subscriptions income, rental income from the property and the income for the annual dinner which of course always comes with substantial costs of sales figures.
5. The Bounceback Loan remains untouched.
6. Expenditure is made up of £56,394 cost of sales (increased slightly from the previous year) and administrative expenses of £134,795 (slightly increased from £126,022 in the previous year).
7. The bulk of the difference relates to increase wage and salary increases in line with inflation and in relation to our initial investment in the CRM system.

Conclusions

8. We made an operating profit of £9,775.
9. We closed the year with £95,674 (including the Bounceback Loan), an increase on 2023.
10. We remain in a very strong position with regards to the balance sheet with substantial equity in the property and rental income from the property.
11. A varied and successful programme of seminars were offered, and sponsorship remained in line with the previous year.
12. Our Events and Membership Executive and Chief Executive continued to support a substantial programme which offered benefits and good value to members. Thanks are due to Helen and Clair who worked extremely hard with their usual spirit and commitment and whilst working on the new CRM system.

2024/25 Preview

13. We are projecting profit on the year in part due to rental income from the property.
14. BLS continued to pay off the mortgage on the property.

15. We ended the year with substantial cash at bank including a sum in #2 Account which included full amount received under the Bounceback Loan.
16. The annual dinner was successful and profitable.

2025/26 Key Objectives

17. The property continues to be let on a 10 year lease with a 5 year break clause.
18. Next year's budget will project a profit.
19. Consideration is being given to the possibility of utilising the rental income to reduce our liabilities (namely the mortgage).
20. We continue to review our conference programme with both in-person and virtual events.
21. We have obtained a CRM system, and considerable time and effort (and investment) has been put into this by Helen and Clair. This will be of huge benefit to the Society and its members moving forwards. We should see efficiencies from that within the business.

Investment/Property

As per previous reports:

22. We have converted most of our historic cash reserves into equity in property.
23. Our mortgage continues to decrease by £6-7k per year with repayments of approximately £12k per year.
24. Going forwards the lease on the property will continue to provide income and cover expenses associated with No 12 and following investment in the CRM system, consideration continues to be given to what scope we have to reduce liabilities (the balance of the Bounce Back Loan and mortgage) in the coming years.

Rachel Fisher
Honorary Treasurer
18 November 2025

BRISTOL LAW SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024
INCOMING PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Good evening,

Thank you for being here today.

Standing before you as the incoming President of the Bristol Law Society is both an honour and a responsibility which I embrace with gratitude and determination.

Bristol's legal community has always been defined by excellence and collaboration. To be entrusted with leading such a community is something I do not take lightly.

Before I share my vision for the year ahead, I want to take a moment to recognise the exceptional leadership of our Immediate Past President, Coralie McKeivor.

Coralie has set an incredible standard through her dedication, professionalism, and the energy she brought to this Society. Her work has strengthened our community, and I am grateful for the foundation she has built. Thank you, Coralie, for your service and for the example you have set.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our Past Presidents, Executive Team, Helen, Clair and our Council Members. Your dedication, insight, and tireless work behind the scenes keep this Society moving forward. I look forward to working alongside you as we shape the next chapter together.

Today is personally meaningful to me.

As I step into this role as the Society's first British Muslim Pakistani President in over 250 years, I do so with deep gratitude and a profound sense of responsibility.

Representation matters, not just for me, but for every young person who may look at the legal profession and wonder whether there is a place for them.

I stand here because of those who opened doors before me, and I intend to keep those doors open even wider for others.

As we look ahead, I see a year full of opportunities to elevate our profession, inspire the next generation, and ensure that our Society remains inclusive, innovative, and supportive of all our members.

Taking each in turn:

Inspiring the Next Generation of Lawyers

A profession's future rests with those preparing to join it.

One of my core commitments this year is to inspire and empower the next generation of lawyers.

We must show students, trainees, and junior lawyers that the law is a place where they belong and where they can make a meaningful impact.

Our Society will continue to work as a bridge: connecting experience with ambition through mentorship and opportunities that open doors for all backgrounds.

Ensuring Accessibility and Inclusion

The law is strongest when shaped by diverse voices. I will champion initiatives that promote equity, support underrepresented groups, and ensure our Society reflects the community we serve.

Strengthening Community, Collaboration, and Responsible Innovation

Our challenges and opportunities are collective. I want Bristol Law Society to continue to serve as a hub bringing together lawyers, academics, students, businesses, and community partners to share ideas and innovate together.

In particular, we must approach technology and AI responsibly. Any innovation or AI platform in the legal sphere should be developed inclusively, involving voices from all walks of life and diverse backgrounds. By ensuring technology serves everyone fairly, we can strengthen access to justice, empower legal professionals, and uphold the values our Society stands for.

Celebrating Local Talent

Bristol is home to some extraordinary legal minds, individuals and organisations who contribute daily to our city's strength, innovation, and reputation.

This year, I want us to shine a brighter spotlight on the talent within our own community. From established lawyers making a difference, to rising stars who bring fresh perspectives, their work deserves recognition.

Celebrating local talent builds confidence, attracts new skills, and shows future lawyers that excellence is born right here among us, within our city, and across our networks.

The year ahead will bring opportunities, challenges, and change. But I am confident that by continuing to work together; our Society is ready for all of it.

As we look ahead, I want to emphasise that the strength of our Society lies in the active participation and diverse perspectives of its members. I invite each of you to reach out, join our committees, attend our events, and let us know how we can better serve you. Together, we can build a Society that truly reflects and supports all its members

As your President, I will lead with integrity, transparency, and purpose; to listen, to collaborate, and to act with fairness; and to represent our community with the respect and commitment it deserves.

Thank you for placing your trust in me.

Thank you to Coralie, for her outstanding service as Immediate Past President.

Thank you to our Executive Team, Helen, Clair and our Council Members for your unwavering support.

Thank you to our local talent both established and emerging, for the inspiration you bring to this profession.

And thank you to every member who contributes daily to the legal profession.

Together, we will make this a year of progress, collaboration, and meaningful impact.

Appendix 4

And together we will continue to break barriers and inspire the lawyers who will shape the future of our profession.

Thank you!

Salma Maqsood
President
2025/26