



Birmingham
Law Society

One Region | One Profession | One Voice

ANNUAL REPORT 2011



President's Foreword

Andrew Lancaster, President



How do I summarise concisely the key activities of the largest and arguably the most dynamic local law society in the country? With great difficulty because there is so much happening and so much to say! Our Honorary Secretaries and others have provided in their reports a run through of many of our activities during the year and so I do not propose to do this again in any detail but rather to provide an overview of some of the key messages and themes for the year.

2011 has seen unprecedented change for our Profession with the introduction of OFR and ABSs and continued sustainability issues for our sector in the light of the wider economic climate and proposed changes to funding. Access to justice is under threat at a result of the Legal Aid Bill and this is something that all lawyers are concerned about, whatever work they are involved in.

During this period of great change the benefits of playing an active part in our BLS community have really come into focus. During the year we have been able to support each other through all this change by education and training, debate, discussion and sharing of ideas. In addition, celebrations, networking events, fundraising have been all important to keep everything in perspective.

We must not lose sight of the fact that as a regional profession, we look after the individual, small businesses, organisations of all shapes and sizes in all sectors, the large corporate, the multi national and governments and businesses around the world. We are a major source of inward investment to our region and the English legal system that we promote and uphold so well is the envy of the world.

So during this past year we have continued to develop the concept of team, supporting each other through change and concentrating on the issues that really matter.

Team

I am immensely grateful to Professional Officers and to Council for the roles they have played in helping to lead us in the work that we do as a Society. Under the chairmanship of Bernard Shepherd this year, we have had a Board that is ensuring that BLS is run exceptionally well and develops the right systems and processes and resources to ensure that we can carry out the activities that we want to as a Society. In addition, our staff team continue to develop their skills and experience and I am immensely grateful to Becky, Glenda, Melanie, Nigel, Denise and Johanna.

Just reading through this report shows the number of people actively involved in BLS; the increasing number of members supporting events and being prepared to do their bit, as time allows, is our strength. At a time when many membership organisations struggle with engagement and support, we see support increasing all the time. I do encourage each of you to consider in this coming year what you can get involved in to contribute to and gain benefit from the BLS community.

We are a membership for all lawyers at every stage in their career from first year law student to those who have been in practice for over 50 years.

You will see from the Student Law report that we have taken active steps to increase our Student Law membership; they are the future of our profession and we should be engaging with and supporting them now and also convincing them that Birmingham and our region is the place where their future lies! Our Newly Qualified event in October has become an annual institution and last year we welcomed about 100 Newly Qualified solicitors; it was a time of great celebration and excitement.

We see this year new appointments to our Professional Officers, Council and Board all of whom are great team players and have varying complementary skills to offer.

Perhaps the greatest example of what we can achieve as an organisation when we grasp the benefits of team was our sponsored abseil for Acorns Children's Hospice on 10 March. About 90 members took part and actively raised money for our chosen charity for the year and many of you gave generously. The total raised for Acorns from this event was over £30,000; our largest sum ever. The total raised for the year is likely to be in excess of £38,000. We could not have done this without so many people being prepared to commit to this cause. I think that by giving, we also all gained much from the experience as individuals and as a community. Let's look for ways to repeat this model of team work in the future.

The strength of our team was also demonstrated at our Legal Awards 2012 event on 22 March with the

wonderful Clare Balding. 570 of us attended to celebrate not just our shortlisted finalists and our winners (although our congratulations go to them all!) but also to celebrate our entire regional profession.

Concentrating on the issues that matter

Whilst we face much change our fundamental principles, values and ethics remain the same. We always act with integrity and in our clients' best interests even if that is to our own detriment. We always strive to ensure that the services we offer are client shaped rather than lawyer shaped. We are passionate about access to justice issues and upholding the rule of law.

On the evening of Tuesday 28th of February 2012, over 70 lawyers from firms across the West Midlands attended a debate on the Motion: 'Professional Ethics Is An Outmoded Concept In A Modern Age.' Speaking for the motion was Mike Ward, Managing Partner of Gateleys and against the motion was John Wotton, President of our national Law Society. The aim of the debate was to discuss whether law firms are no more than businesses competing to sell products as cheaply as possible or are there foundational ethics and values to the legal profession that need to be safeguarded and preserved as the market perhaps drives us in different directions? What do we stand for as a profession? What are our core values that are non negotiable in a changing climate?

It was a fascinating event attended by lawyers at all stages in their legal careers who voted overwhelmingly against the motion but accepted that our professional ethics are under strain and need to be safeguarded.

On access to justice issues, we continue to Sound Off for Justice and to oppose the harsher aspects of the Legal Aid Bill that will cause hardship and a breakdown of social cohesion in our communities. We are actively supporting the Birmingham Law Centre and Birmingham CAB who are in the front line of these changes.

As a regional profession we represent the poor and the vulnerable in our society and internationally in the human rights work that we do. Last year a touch of Hollywood glamour came to Birmingham when we organised a special screening of "The Whistleblower", starring Oscar winner Rachel Weisz.

The film is based on the story of Kathryn Bolkovac, who was sacked from her role as a United Nations peacekeeper after she uncovered a sex trafficking ring in Bosnia. Her successful case against dismissal was handled by Birmingham lawyer Karen Bailey, of Bailey Wright Solicitors, who attended the screening at The Electric Cinema, along with Kathryn.

We are now attracting national speakers to BLS conferences and events on a regular basis because they know that these will be run exceptionally well. Let me give you an example. In June we ran a major Conference on the Future of Legal Services. That conference was attended by Joshua Rozenberg and his Law in Action team. It was also attended by the Chair of the Legal Services Board and the Chair of the SRA and the Chief Executive of the National Law Society.

In January we ran a Planning for Change Conference attended by key national speakers who can contribute to our debate about how we address the many changes to our sector.

In October the Attorney General spent a day with us and attended not one but two events; a lunch and the launch of our pro bono committee. I would invite you to read carefully the report from Ruth Creed, chair of our pro bono committee and consider how you can support the work of this committee that is helping us to support organisations that are in the business of ensuring access to justice for the poor and vulnerable in our society.

We have done so much more but I hope that this report will encourage us all in the important work that we do as lawyers and in the commitment that we will be prepared to give to BLS and to each other over this coming year.

It just leaves me to thank you all for your support and I know that you will give Mary Kaye your support as she takes up the role of President and our team leader, from the AGM.

Andrew Lancaster
President
Birmingham Law Society

Report from the Board



After the first year of the Board when the Directors, led very professionally by Jon Lloyd of Anthony Collins, a new Board was elected consisting of Bernard Shepherd of Blakemores as Chairman, Chris Owen of St Philips Chambers as Vice Chairman, John Hughes of Shakespeares as Finance Director, Eileen Schofield of Schofield & Associates as Marketing Director, Andrew Beedham of Clark Wilmott as IT Director, Angela Henry of Ferdinand Kelly as Staff Administration Director and Dean Parnell as Non Executive Director.

The Board's objective is to manage the business of the Birmingham Law Society allowing the Officers to concentrate on membership matters and ensuring that the Officers, particularly the President, receive maximum support from the Board.

Financially the Society is in a sound position with cash in the bank, a reasonable deposit account and investments in the region of £143,000 as at the date of this report. The Financial Director will give a full report on the financial position.

The property at 8 Temple Street which remains unfit for purpose is currently an asset of the Society. Efforts have been made to find a purchaser but to date no reasonable offer has been forthcoming. There is an income of £47,000 from the shop unit at the moment and until September 2012. However, the tenant, The DX Group, has informed the Society that it is the Group's intention to terminate the lease on 12th September 2012. Negotiations are proceeding with the Group but it may be necessary to find a new tenant. Without a shop tenant the rates and maintenance of the whole of 8 Temple Street will become the liability of the Society.

An offer of a joint venture made some twelve months ago is still on the table whereby £500,000 will be invested in the property in exchange for 50% ownership of the freehold interest. The sale proceeds will be used solely to refurbish and modernise the building to a high standard. This will mean that each floor of the building will be lettable as a separate unit when there is the possibility of BLS taking the lease of the library floor. Talks continue and if this is the path the Society follows plans will be made available to the membership over a consultation period.

Andrew Beedham has reviewed the Society's IT needs resulting in a change of supplier and systems with the website currently under review.

Angela Henry has undergone a thorough review of the contracts of the staff and has provided extensive support to the staff throughout the year.

All Directors have played their part this year, working together and with the team from the Society's office.

Overall, the year has been good for the Society despite the national and international economic problems. This has not only been due to the work of the Directors but also the Officers, the BLS administration team members and sponsors all working together.

My year as Chairman has come to an end and I am now stepping down to allow a new Chairman to take the Board and Society forward with new thoughts and directions although I will stay on the Board for a further year to complete my three year term.

I express my thanks to all who have supported me.

Finance Report

John Hughes,
Honorary Treasurer



I am pleased to report that the finances of the Society continue to be sound.

At the time of preparing this Report it is anticipated that the surplus for the year ended 31 December 2011 will be in the region of £30,000 which is very similar to the surplus achieved in the previous year (£36,000).

The main source of income remains the subscriptions and these have held up remarkably well notwithstanding the economic climate in which we are operating.

The method of calculating subscriptions was reviewed during the year to introduce a cap on fees which it was felt would encourage the larger national law firms to renew and join. The Board and the Council do appreciate members increasingly wish to see real benefits in remaining as members of the Society and this is something very much at the forefront of our thinking when planning for future activities.

Major events such as the Legal Awards Dinner and the President's Dinner still very much depend on sponsorship to ensure that they are profitable. The Board and the Council do very much appreciate the support given by our sponsors. I was encouraged when discussing banking arrangements with a number of banks within the City the importance they attach to developing ties with the legal profession. I am confident that we will continue to obtain sponsorship from the banking and other sectors.

The Training Programmes undertaken by Glenda continues to be profitable in a very competitive market.

We have been reviewing ways in which the subscriptions may be collected more easily, particularly from students. After our discussions with the Society's bank, facilities are now in place to pay by credit and debit cards and this is very much the preferred option of payment particularly when recruiting amongst the student community.

We have approximately £135,000 invested on our behalf by Harris Allday and with healthy balances in our bank accounts the Society is well placed to face the future. 2012 will not be without its challenges. The property at Temple Street remains unsold and there is concern that Hays DX may wish to break their lease in September, although at the time of preparing this Report discussions are ongoing. If this were to occur and a new tenant is not found quickly, this could have a major impact on the cashflow of the Society (the rent is currently £47,750 per annum). The Board are fully aware of the challenges

ahead and the need to ensure that the strong financial base that the Society currently enjoys continues and therefore every effort will be made to explore other areas to continue to build on the financial strength.

I would like to thank the dedicated Team who work for the Society, Becky, Mel, Glenda, Denise, Johanna and, not least, Nigel, who has been a great help and support to me throughout the year.

We approach 2012 full of confidence with a loyal team and a strong membership base, with an increasing number of student members, which is a source of great encouragement for the future of the Society.

President

ANDREW LANCASTER - Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP, 0121 212 7421

Vice President

MARY KAYE - SGH Martineau, 0870 763 1687

Deputy Vice President

MARTIN ALLSOPP - Allsopp & Co Incorporating AJ Salisbury & Co, 0121 705 9020

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ANN HOUGHTON - Irwin Mitchell Solicitors, 0121 214 5408

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Vice Chairman - Chris Owen - St Philips Chambers, 0121 246 7000

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Warwickshire Law Society

Walsall Association

The West Midland Assoc. of Law Societies

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Professional Services Manager: Glenda Rogers, Tel: 0121 222 4193 / 07809502852

Administrator/Membership: Melanie Yuill, Tel: 0121 222 4195

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District Judge Dowding,
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Ann Houghton, Irwin Mitchell Solicitors
Dean Parnell, Sydney Mitchell

Report of the Joint Honorary Secretaries

This year has been a very eventful for Birmingham Law Society, and as the joint secretaries we have found it an enjoyable though demanding year.

The Professional Officers and the Board have been focussing upon increasing the profile of BLS as a representative body for its diverse membership. BLS, through its committees and members, has responded to important consultations in relation to; for example, the challenges of the Legal Aid Bill. This has been reinforced by the support given by BLS to Birmingham Law Centre, and its work to continue to provide vital access to justice services.

A main theme of the President and the Professional Officers and the Board has been to strengthen 'Team BLS'. The involvement of Council and other members playing a part in the future of BLS, its representative function, and in engaging in activities, has been an important aspect of the year. The President has through the debates which have been taken place at Council meetings provided a discussion platform for a number of important issues for the profession.

There have been ongoing developments this year in the following:

- The increased and diverse membership of the previous year continued to be progressed. The newly created Law Students Committee has engaged with the universities located in Birmingham, and the members have given inspiring talks at each university to law students, both undergraduates and postgraduates. This has resulted in over 100 law students becoming members of BLS. BLS is setting the scene here as no other local Law Society has opened its membership to law students. It is an example of BLS representing the future of the legal profession by investing in the development and progress of the future of tomorrow's lawyers, and by widening membership it is ensuring that the views of all those interested in the future life of the profession are heard, engaged with and promoted.
- As always the learning and development programme, as blended together by Glenda Rogers, has created a schedule of relevant, topical and thought provoking seminars. Glenda ensures that the seminar programme is constantly refreshed by consulting with

members, delegates and other legal specialists, and is always keen to receive suggestions for new seminar/event topics from committees and/or members. Again, this illustrates the theme of 'Team BLS'. Glenda has carried out her role excellently. Please continue to attend the seminars and provide fresh ideas.

- Council meetings have continued to be lively with debates/discussions on important topics including:
 - Access to justice, and in particular, the Legal Aid Bill changes.
 - The challenges facing the Legal Services market and ABSs.
 - Considering whether to widen BLS membership in the light of ABSs.

There have also been a number of high profile conferences and events including:

- Planning for the Future with Des Hudson, Chief Executive of the Law Society being one of the presenters.
- The future of the Legal Services conference with amongst the presenters, Charles Plant, Chair of SRA and David Edmonds Chair of LSB.
- The Attorney General opened the society's first ever Pro Bono event.

The debates and events have enabled more of the membership to engage and discuss their concerns and views with relevant individuals, and has provided BLS with an opportunity to represent the views of the membership community.

- BLS has, once again, had an eventful and active year but all this activity would not be possible without the expertise of the BLS staff team, who although a small team, provide an excellent and efficient service to the Professional Officers, the Board, Council and all the members of BLS. Many thanks to the team for all their superb work this year.

BLS is in a financially healthy position to meet the challenges and opportunities of the forthcoming year, and looks forward to engaging with members and representing their views in the ever changing legal market.

Bernardette Griffin,
Joint Honorary Secretary



Ann Houghton,
Joint Honorary Secretary



Annual General Meeting held on 19th April 2011

The Council has pleasure in presenting the 193rd Annual Report of the proceeding of the Society.

Officers

At the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 19 April 2011, Mr Andrew Lancaster was installed as President of the Society, Mrs Mary Kaye as Vice President and Mr Martin Allsopp as Deputy Vice President. Mrs Bernardette Griffin and Mrs Ann Houghton were installed as Joint Honorary Secretaries. Martin Allsopp retired as Honorary Treasurer.

Obituaries

It is with deep regret that the Council report the deaths of members and friends.

Mr Anthony Norman Barlow, Retired member on 21 November 2011

Mr Russell Orme, Senior Partner, DLA on 20 January 2012

Council

The retiring ordinary members of the Council are:

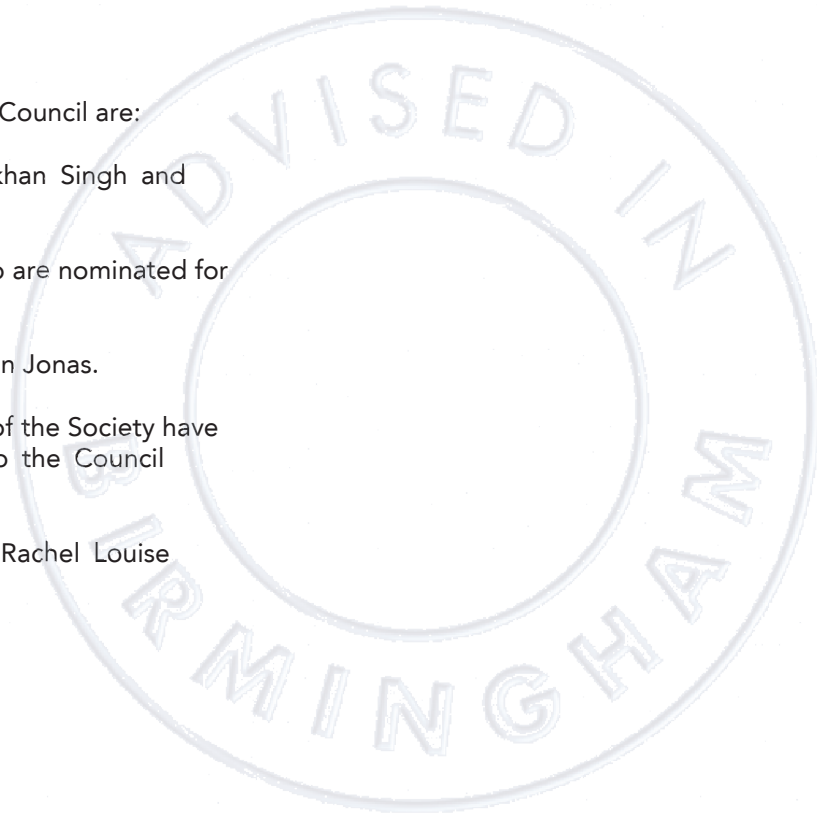
Richard Follis, Beverley Money, Makhan Singh and Richard Steer.

The ordinary members of Council who are nominated for re-election pursuant to Article 39 are:

Karen Bailey, Angela Henry and Steven Jonas.

Additionally, the following members of the Society have been duly nominated for election to the Council pursuant to Article 42:

Mitchell Jon Ball, Cassandra Bates, Rachel Louise Broughton and Sarah Kenyon.



Consultation Paper Committee

I was delighted to be asked to take over the Chairmanship of the Consultation Committee in October 2011. I was staggered initially to realise that the Consultation Committee comprises largely of past Presidents with considerable legal influence and I am most grateful for the support given to me by the Committee to my Chairmanship to date. As you know we are the largest Law Society in England & Wales and I have absolutely no doubt that the responses offered by the Society are held in high regard by those who seek to influence the profession and in the way that we operate. Over the last 12 months we have written to and responded (inter alia) papers relating to an MOJ consultation, a coroners consultation the Civil Justice Review, The Quality Assurance Scheme for Advocates, the magnificently titled Equality Impact Assessment Initial Screening – Judicial Appointments Consultation, TUPE Regulations, Fees in Employment Tribunals and the Employment Appeal Tribunal and a review of the minimum salary requirements for trainee solicitors. I understand there are other papers in the pipeline as I submit this report and we expect a very busy year ahead!

Policy Committee

The Policy Committee may appear now to be redundant in their function. I disagree, their role is as important as ever, I have found that the wealth of experience in the Committee gave me both personal and professional support. In understanding how past Presidents, Officers and Council members have supported and developed the Society is invaluable in going forward and building an even stronger modern Society with whom our members can identify.

It was mooted that the name should be change to the "think tank" committee (not easy to say when you are Irish) so I stuck with the Policy Committee but in essence that is the function of the Committee to the Society.

Public Relations/Media Committee

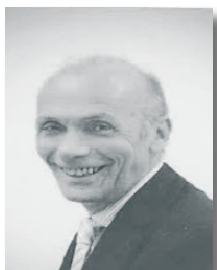
The PR & Media committee met monthly throughout the year providing support both for officers and individual projects.

The Society undertakes a great deal of work, especially through its specialist committees, much of which is unsung and, often, unnoticed by the wider profession. One of the key aims of the PR & Media committee is to encourage this work to receive wider coverage. Whether through the Bulletin, The Birmingham Post or other publications, the committee helps to identify aspects of the Society's work which may be newsworthy to the profession or a wider readership. Once so identified, the committee, in conjunction with the Society's PR consultants Headline Communications, help with suggestions as to how such work can best be showcased or communicated generally.

If truth be told, of course not every aspect of the work of BLS makes a good read or a printable story. Many of the technical regulatory issues that concern the profession at present are of little interest to anyone other than a practicing lawyer. Even issues which will impact the wider public and business, in other words our respective clients, are frequently perceived as too dull to be of interest. The PR & Media committee help identify the stories that should "have legs" and facilitate getting them into the appropriate news or technical press.

2011 saw some new initiatives come to fruition. BLS is now on Twitter and we hope that practical experience within the Society of new digital media will encourage confidence in using it to reach a wider audience. The year also saw BLS hosting a Birmingham film premier. The work of local practitioner and BLS member Karen Bailey formed the backdrop to "The Whistleblower". This is a powerful and moving full length feature film about human trafficking, sexual abuse and other human rights abuses in Bosnia; some involving UN personnel. Described by one reviewer as "brutally important" the film is based on what one former US police officer found was going on under the noses of the authorities. She blew the whistle and was quickly fired for her troubles. Ultimately she was vindicated thanks to Karen's work when an English Industrial Tribunal upheld her claim against a foreign corporation who had chosen the UK as a convenient domicile. This vital legal work, successfully standing up for truth as well as an individual's employment rights, was conducted out of Birmingham.

Martin Allsopp, Chairman,
Consultation Paper Committee



Mary Kaye,
Policy Committee



The screening attracted a number of the individuals who were central to the real life story. Members and guests were spell bound by the film and then enjoyed an opportunity to talk with those who had had the courage to stand up for what they believed in – despite the considerable forces deployed against them. It was truly moving and a unique opportunity to showcase the importance of this work as well as Karen's part in it. Needless to say, the media opportunity this presented was fully taken up. Our own event followed hard on the heels of a screening to the UN so no-one can say BLS is parochial!

Whether acting as a sounding board for regular Post columns, helping organize press features or putting on a once in a lifetime local premier for a Hollywood film arising from the work of a BLS member, the PR & Media committee are proud to be able to help give the work of our Society and members a wider audience. I am grateful to each of the members, including those co-opted during the year on specific projects, for their time and sound judgment in helping to do this. I would also like to thank successive Presidents and Vice Presidents for taking an active interest in this committee and actively considering the PR & Media aspect of the Society's work.

Bulletin

Thanks to the continued hard work of the staff of Birmingham Law Society (especially Assistant Editor, Becky Lynch) and to all at PW Media (especially Paul Blythe), the quality of the magazine improves with each issue. The standard of copy we have received over the last year has been very high and my thanks go to all who have penned articles and features for the magazine, both members of Birmingham Law Society and non-members. This year we have tried to include more of a legal/lifestyle balance which we hope we have achieved. The restaurant feature has proved popular and there has been a lot of positive feedback for the "Pro Bono Notice Board". I referred in several of my "Editor's Letters" last year to the fact that we needed as many features and articles as possible from members to make the magazine a quality one worth reading by our members and in 2011 you did not disappoint.

Richard Follis, Chairman
Public Relations/Media Committee



Judy Bonegal
Bulletin Editor



Glenda Rogers,
Chair, Learning & Development



Learning and Development

Birmingham Law Society's Learning & Development department has had another busy and successful year. On 9 June, we held a very successful conference on the Future of Legal Services. More than 120 delegates attended the event, from sole practitioners to national heavyweight practices, barristers, in-house counsel, representatives from the national law society and SRA and a number of legal journalists. A high profile panel of local and national speakers, chaired by leading legal commentator Joshua Rozenberg, presented during the day-long event. David Edmonds, Chairman of the Legal Services Board (LSB), presented the first session of the day. A number of panellists were interviewed and featured in BBC Radio 4's 'Law in Action'.

By working closely with our committees, our loyal team of expert speakers, sponsors and corporate partners we have been able to maintain a niche in the market. Our seminars, debates and conferences are highly topical and relevant and continue to inform our members about the changes facing the legal community. We continue to streamline all overheads in order to pass savings onto delegates by reducing course fees thereby providing even better value for money for our members. We work closely with a wide range of sponsors to present free CPD accredited seminars and debates and run a wide range of morning, evening seminars, workshops and "lunch & Learn" events which have received excellent feedback from delegates. Seminars involving a cross section of the legal community combined with networking opportunities hosted by member firms and in local city centre venues have proved to be very successful with the added advantage of reducing time away from the office for busy lawyers.

As a regional law society, it is essential that we offer more than our commercial competitors by not only providing member firms with a first class CPD training programme but by also offering guidance and support to law students throughout their careers. To ensure that this remains a priority, I sit as a member of the Education and Training Committee which organised another very successful and informative "Careers In Law Forum" in February.

Criminal Law Committee

This year the economic climate has forced all agencies involved in the Criminal Justice System to cut expenditure. Moving to a system where information is stored and transmitted electronically is seen as one way of reducing costs. The Criminal Law Committee representatives met regularly over the year to discuss and advice on all such changes and the topics discussed included:

- The Crown Prosecution Service proposals to digitize its files by April 2012 and serve evidence electronically. Such process would save printing, copying and storage charges for the CPS, but then the same costs would be incurred by defence solicitors who would have to print and copy the material for their clients to comply with their obligations to advise on the evidence.
- The Police Force's decision to consolidate its resources by closing local police stations in favour of fewer larger and better equipped stations able to deal with a large number of suspects.
- The Early Guilty Plea Scheme introduced at the Birmingham Crown Court to reduce ineffective trials where defendants plead guilty at the last minute.
- The riots in Birmingham and the impact of increased cases in courts. The Court sittings in the evenings and on weekends for such cases. On some days the court sat from 8.00 pm to midnight and also on Sundays for the first time in its history.

I thank all the Committee members for their continued support, commitment and assistance thorough the year.

Sukhdev Singh Bhomra,
Chairman, Criminal Law Committee



Pro Bono Committee

During its first year, the Pro Bono Committee has, with great gusto, set about its aims of supporting, co-ordinating, promoting, signposting and raising the profile of pro bono work amongst BLS members and the local community.

Some of our highlights include:

1. Hosting a launch event on 31 October 2011 where the Attorney General gave a key note speech to over 150 BLS members keen to get involved in pro bono work.
2. Establishing a monthly *Pro Bono Notice Board* in the Bulletin which includes pro bono news, appeals, events and pro bono opportunities for BLS members.
3. Circulating questionnaires to BLS members and pro bono organisations and initiating a matching process. BLS members have since begun pro bono work for organisations who really needed their help.
4. Giving presentations at key events, e.g. the Thrive Forum on 5 December 2011 and LawWork's Birmingham Roundtable meeting on 18 October 2011.
5. Holding meetings to discuss pro bono initiatives with key players in Birmingham:
 - a. Chambers: St Ives, No. 5 and St Philips.
 - b. Birmingham CAB.
 - c. Birmingham Law Centre.
 - d. Educational establishments: BPP, College of Law, Birmingham City University, Aston University and the University of Birmingham.
 - e. Professional Support Unit.

In the forthcoming year we are planning a pro bono forum (17 April 2012), increasing the number of committee members and organising a pro bono networking event in October 2012 (just before National Pro Bono Week).

The Pro Bono Committee continues to go from strength to strength.

Pro Bono Committee



Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC)

The Dispute Resolution Committee has moved from strength to strength and was responsible for three key events last year. The emphasis has been quality over quantity and the events organised by the Committee have received excellent support and tremendous feedback.

The first event involved the high profile visit of Lord Neuberger, Master of the Rolls who attended two events in Birmingham. The first event involved a meeting, kindly hosted by International law firm Pinsent Masons LLP, with 20 leading litigation lawyers from this region. The meeting covered many topics and allowed our regional litigation lawyers to express their views on the Jackson reforms and the changing litigation landscape. The second event involved a very well attended lunch at Hotel Du Vin, where there was excellent representation from a good range of law firms and chambers. During the lunch Lord Neuberger gave a very interesting and quite honest address about his thoughts on various issues affecting the legal profession.

In November 2011, the Committee teamed up with the forensics team at BDO LLP and arranged a "hot tubbing" event for the local legal community. Hot tubbing is a method of giving evidence where both experts give evidence simultaneously and the court asks questions and may even encourage a discussion between them. Jackson LJ's final report recommended that "hot tubbing" should be piloted in cases where all parties and the judge agree to it. The actual event took the form of a mock hot tubbing session where BDO supplied the experts and the Committee secured a circuit Judge who was very experienced in hot tubbing.

In addition to the above and as a result of the likely impact the Jackson reforms will have on the personal injury sector, the Committee set up a subcommittee of leading PI lawyers from our region. What is particularly

unique about this subcommittee is the fact it has members from both the defendant and the claimant camps. As a result they have been able to give very balanced views on many PI related issues throughout the year. A separate report has been prepared by the chair of this subcommittee, Caroline Coates.

Finally, various members of the Committee have been responsible for litigation related articles and all members have sought to promote the Committee and Society wherever and whenever possible. It has been a great year for the Committee and we are now exploring some very exciting projects for 2012.

Personal Injury Subcommittee

Following the work of the Dispute Resolution Committee in the previous 12 months, focusing on the reforms proposed by Lord Justice Jackson and by the Ministry of Justice with regard to the reform of civil litigation funding and costs, the DRC decided to create a subcommittee to focus solely on the area of personal injury. This is an area undergoing much change and is of considerable interest and relevant to a large number of Birmingham Law Society members.

In July 2011 therefore, Caroline Coates of Buller Jeffries was tasked with creating the committee. Senior representatives from the most high profile firms acting for claimants and defendants have joined the committee together with members of the bar. The meetings have generated some lively debate and a surprising degree of consensus has been demonstrated. We have also been delighted to welcome the head of personal injury from Birmingham City Council to the group. Hitting the ground running, the committee prepared responses for the Civil Justice Council's working party on the issues of proportionality, Part 36 and qualified one way costs shifting. The committee has also been quick to prepare information to be disseminated widely to members through the BLS bulletin, in order to keep members informed of the progress of the reforms.

Dean Parnell, Chairman,
Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC)



Caroline Coates
Personal Injury Sub Committee



Over the next 12 months, the committee will continue to lobby and submit responses to the ongoing consultations and to keep members informed of developments as they occur.

Education & Training Committee

The membership of Education and Training Committee has remained constant this year except for the replacement of members for the BTSS and Birmingham City University. One new member has joined the Committee, Monica Kapur, who is Head of Insolvency at Else Solicitors. The membership of the Committee continues to have a spread of members from firms, education, the Bar and the BTSS.

The Committee held a seminar on the Outcomes of the Work Based Learning Pilot implemented by the SRA. External professionals from Graduate Recruitment and Human Resources who work within legal organisations were invited to encourage a wider dialogue. Dr Tim Pearce, Policy Executive at the SRA presented the findings. An article covering this area has been produced.

During the year the committee has discussed SRA consultations and responded where appropriate. It is currently considering the SRAs proposal to abolish the minimum salary for trainees as currently set by the SRA.

The committee has also been feeding in suggestions of new skills areas for the BLS Education and Training programme.

The committee had a Careers Schools Conference in February 2012. This event provided legal and legally-related careers information to students from schools, sixth forms and colleges.

The event involved the Committee and a number of BLS representatives from the firms and chambers including trainee solicitors, pupil barristers, legal executives, clerk to chambers and Business Support Professionals. The

students had information of various career routes, and interacted with practitioners via speed networking and negotiation skills workshops. The conference focused on engaging students from diverse backgrounds who would have limited exposure to the law.

The committee members have some on going discussion areas to progress in the next year such as the Legal Education and Training Review which will be out for consultation in December 2012.

The committee members have worked very constructively together to promote the objectives of BLS, and I appreciate all their support during the year.

Employment Law Committee

The Employment Law committee continued to meet throughout 2011 to consider changes in employment Law and the impact of changes in Tribunal practice on the work of practitioners.

We have had no resignations from the committee during that period but we have had further members join, Tim Jones (Higgs & Sons) and Eileen Schofield.

An Employment Law Supplement was organised for the Birmingham Post with contributions from member firms and an introduction from Alan Jones (Averta) and the Chair.

We have invited the then new Regional Employment judge, the Regional Director of ACAS and a Law Net Mediator who have each provided updates on their field as well as useful insights.

A training session was organised by the Committee with the support of Glenda Rogers. It was held on 23 June 2011 at Gateley. The panel was chaired by Michael Hibbs and the speakers were Employment Judge Veronica Dean, Malcolm Boswell, Regional Director of ACAS and Brenda Parkinson from the EHRC.

Michael Hibbs, Chair,
Employment Law Committee



Bernardette Griffin,
Chair, Education & Training Committee



During the course of the year Government Consultations on employment law issues have been responded to.

The meetings have all been well attended and the Chair would like to express his gratitude to other committee members for their continued support and hard work.

Family Law Committee

We started off in spring 2011 with the Consultation Papers upon the reforms of Legal Aid, and upon Marital Contracts, and a complete overhaul of the Family Proceedings Rules.

Our focus has been to discuss practical solutions to resolving delay. In September it was really encouraging to learn that the key performance indicators were that Cafcass were filing reports in time. The Local Performance Improvement Group known as "LPIG" provided feedback upon the "Joint Action Plan" submitted to the national group, alongside the Family Justice Review which proposed that child cases should take no longer than six months.

Last summer, the Family Law Supplement published in the Birmingham Post, was very successful in promoting local practice.

We have welcomed the appointment of Her Honour Justice Mrs Eleanor King CBE to the High Court Bench in Birmingham.

We have seen the future of family law moving towards the increased use of ADR.

There has been the introduction of facilities to accommodate the increased number of litigants in person using the courts.

There are moves to streamline the e-filing of court documents.

We learnt of the closure of Child Contact Centres locally, but were encouraged to hear of an innovative approach to supervised contact orders.

We await the response from the Ministry of Justice and the Legal Services Commission upon the new round of legislation proposed from on or around May 2012.

I would like to take the opportunity to personally thank all members for their continuing support and commitment.

International Committee

The Committee meets regularly every month, and I must thank Tony McDavid at No 5 Chambers for hosting the meetings.

The year has been fairly quiet from the point of view of visits to other countries, although we have managed a trip to Lyon in December for the opening of the legal year there. A visit to Istanbul was planned for 19th March 2012 with a delegation from the business community and the Birmingham Law Society. This had to be postponed but will take place in the future.

We have entertained three delegations from mainland China. The first was hosted by the College of Law when the delegation requested information in respect of our Legal Aid system.

The second was hosted by Blakemores solicitors when the delegation was interested in training and qualification as Solicitors and Barristers.

The third again hosted by Blakemores Solicitors when the delegation was more interested in the judiciary and sentencing.

All three delegations showed tremendous interest in our legal systems as indicated by the lively Q & A sessions after each presentation. The Birmingham Corporation

Bernard Sheperd
Chair, International Committee



Claire Darley
Chair, Family Law Committee



Legal Department assisted in hosting part of a presentation at its offices for the second delegation and our grateful thanks goes to the College of Law, Blakemores Solicitors and the Birmingham Corporation Legal Department.

The support given by No 5 Chambers and St Philips Chambers is also acknowledged and is important to the business of the international committee.

Further visits will be planned for next year when we intend to have more delegations visit the Birmingham Law Society from different parts of the world.

We will continue to promote Birmingham and its legal community and thank everybody for their support.

The Committee would like to acknowledge support from Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, UK Trade and Industry and the British American Business Council for continuing support. We would particularly like to thank Steve Cunnane of UK Trade & Industry who has attended all of our Committee meetings and ensured that UK Trade & Industry support any delegation with its expertise and funding when available.

Thanks to the committee members for their time and support during the year.

Property & Development Committee

We have had a good spread of representation on the Committee this year, with not only solicitors from large to medium to small practices and sole practitioners, but also Tony Verduyn, a property barrister from St Philips Chambers, as well as continued representation by Steve Kellway of the Land Registry, Coventry and Roger Lloyd of Birmingham City Council Legal Services.

We have tried this year to arrange for a member to give a ten minute talk on a particular topic of interest at each meeting. Thus we have had talks on the Law Society

Conveyancing Protocol; the Localism Bill (now an Act of Parliament); the Law Commission proposals to reform the law relating to covenants and easements; the Community Infrastructure Levy; and on the intriguing subject of subterranean registration matter. Mitchell Ball kindly arranged for a speaker from Seven Trent Water to give a presentation on the new legislation relating to the adoption of private sewers.

One topic that has inevitably exercised the minds of members of the Property & Development Committee this year has been the continued discrimination of conveyancing practices by lenders. Membership of the recently introduced quality assurance scheme has not stopped firms from being arbitrarily excluded from lenders panels.

Other topics discussed have included recent case law on the "general boundaries rule" in registered conveyancing; chancel repair liability; standard contracts in conveyancing; impending changes in "right to buy" legislation; and the Government's draft National Planning Policy Framework. The decision in *Padden -v- Bevan Ashford 2011* provided a cautionary tale on the dangers of giving insufficient advice during a free advice session.

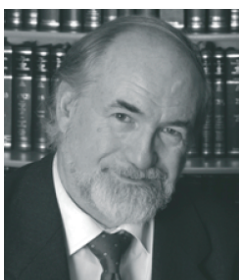
I would like to express my gratitude to all our members for their contributions, and in particular to Geoff Wood of Coley & Tilley, our Honorary Secretary, for the preparation of our agendas and minutes.

This will be my last year as Chairman of the Committee. Our Vice-Chairman Sarah Dwight, who recently became a member of the Law Society's Conveyancing Committee, will take over the Chairmanship of the Committee in April. Martineau Solicitors have kindly agreed for future meetings of the Committee to be held at their offices in Colmore Square.

Student Committee

The Student Committee was formed in 2011 to engage with university students who, although historically

John Hughes, Chair,
Property & Development Committee



welcome to join BLS, had apparently never been targeted and were perhaps entirely unaware of what membership of BLS could offer.

The committee has been keen to increase student membership as students have historically been isolated from the local legal community. In view of the ever increasing competition for training contracts we are especially keen to support local students considering a career in the law. The committee's plan is to provide a number of dedicated student events each year which will not only educate students on a legal career, it will also allow them to start preparing for their future careers as early as possible.

The committee comprises Ben Henry, Ann Houghton, Bernadette Griffin, Angela Henry and Dean Parnell, as well as representatives from each local university's own student body.

Through September and October we attended at each of the local universities and gave a presentation to the students and signed up new members. We now have over 120 student members and the numbers grow after each event we host.

Our inaugural event, a "speed networking" evening, was held at Birmingham University in January 2012, and was attended by over 100 students. It was very well received by all who attended, and as a result will be repeated for next year's intake of students.

Ben Henry, Chair,
Student Committee



DIRECTORS' REPORT YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2011*(A Company Limited by Guarantee)*

The directors present their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2011.

Principal Activity

The principal activity of the company continues to be the provision of facilities for members in accordance with the purposes set out in the Memorandum of Association.

Directors (Officers of the Council)

The directors listed below served during the year under review.

B R M Shepherd	
E T M Allsop	(resigned on 19th April 2011)
A Beedham	(appointed on 19th April 2011)
A Henry	(appointed on 19th April 2011)
J Hughes	(appointed on 19th April 2011)
J Lloyd	(resigned on 19th April 2011)
C Owen	(appointed on 23 February 2011)
E Schofield	(appointed on 19 April 2011)

Shares of the company

The company is limited by guarantee not having a share capital divided into shares. Each member guarantees during his membership and for one year after membership ceases, a sum up to £10 to the Society in the event of a winding up order.

Freehold property

In the opinion of the directors the value of the Society's building and the site on which it stands is substantially in excess of that at which it is shown on the balance sheet.

Statement of directors' responsibilities

The directors are responsible for preparing the Report of the Directors and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and Applicable Law). Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Statement as to disclosure of information to Auditors

So far as the directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each director has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, J W Hinks, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD
B R M Shepherd
Chairman

28th March 2012

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO
THE MEMBERS OF THE BIRMINGHAM LAW SOCIETY

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

We have audited the financial statements of The Birmingham Law Society for the year ended 31st December 2011 on pages five to fifteen. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008) (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities).

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of directors and auditors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities set out on page 1, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the companies circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the directors; and the overall presentation of the financial statements.

Opinion on the financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31st December 2011 and of its profit for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion the information given in the Report of the Directors for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of director's remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements and the Report of the Directors in accordance with the small companies regime.

POH Jones (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of J W Hinks
Chartered Accountants
and Registered Auditors
19 Highfield Road
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 3BH

28th March 2012

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT

Year ended 31 December 2011

	Notes	2011 £	2010 £
TURNOVER: continuing activities	2	217,710	208,135
External charges:			
Books and binding		6,847	6,150
Lectures and courses		27,013	26,539
Printing, stationery and general expenses		6,702	5,341
Non-claimable input VAT		-	7,783
		(40,562)	(45,813)
Staff costs:			
Wages and salaries	3	86,386	79,154
Social security costs		8,057	7,673
		(94,443)	(86,827)
Depreciation			
Owned assets		4,100	4,218
Leased assets		1,600	1,600
		(5,700)	(5,818)
Profit / (loss) on disposal of fixed assets		-	1,077
Other operating charges	4	(100,991)	(81,371)
(LOSS) ON OPERATING ACTIVITIES BEFORE RENTS AND ROOM HIRE ETC	5	(23,986)	(10,617)
Rents and room hire		47,750	47,750
Insurance recharges		3,145	3,966
Sale of library books		-	918
		50,895	52,634
OPERATING PROFIT / (LOSS) ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE INTEREST		26,909	42,017
Investment income	6	5,537	4,680
Interest payable	7	(1,673)	(1,673)
Realised (losses)/gains on investment disposals	10	(303)	671
PROFIT / (LOSS) ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION		30,470	44,353
Tax on ordinary activities	8	(5,553)	(8,100)
PROFIT / (LOSS) ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES AFTER TAXATION	16	24,917	36,253

STATEMENT OF TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES

Year ended 31 December 2011

	2011 £	2010 £
Profit / (loss) for the financial year	24,917	36,253
Unrealised gains/(losses) on trade investments	<u>(7,759)</u>	<u>15,516</u>
Total recognised gains and losses relating to the year	<u>17,158</u>	<u>51,769</u>

BALANCE SHEET

Year ended 31 December 2011

	Notes	£	2011 £	£	2010 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	9		11,862		12,114
Investments	10		<u>131,935</u>		<u>142,870</u>
			143,797		154,984
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	11	144,524		135,759	
Property held for resale	12	23,043		23,043	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>91,471</u>		<u>41,702</u>	
		259,038		200,504	
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(214,905)</u>		<u>(183,383)</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)			<u>44,133</u>		<u>17,121</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			187,930		172,105
CREDITORS: amounts falling due after more than one year	14		<u>-</u>		<u>1,333</u>
NET ASSETS			<u>187,930</u>		<u>170,772</u>
Representing:					
Accumulated Fund	16		164,965		140,724
Revaluation Reserve	16		<u>22,965</u>		<u>30,724</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>187,930</u>		<u>170,772</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The financial statements were approved by the Officers on behalf of the Council on 28th March 2012.

Chairman B R M Shepherd

Financial Director J Hughes

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Year ended 31 December 2011

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards. The particular policies adopted are described below:

Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of investments and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

Turnover

Turnover represents the invoiced sales of services, excluding Value Added Tax, and revenues are earned when such values are supplied. Turnover received in advance is not recognised as income but as deferred income until such time when services are supplied.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Fixed assets donated to the Society are included as income at an estimate of their market value at the time of receipt. Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value, of tangible fixed assets over their estimated useful lives to the business at the following rates:

Furniture and equipment (owned)	- 15% per annum on reducing balance basis
Furniture and equipment (leased)	- 20% per annum on straight line basis
Computer equipment	- 25% per annum on straight line basis

Investments

Listed investments are stated in the financial statements at closing middle market price immediately prior to the end of the financial year. Income from listed investments is recognised as income received.

Realised gains and losses are shown separately in the appropriate section of the profit and loss account.

Unrealised gains and losses in the current year are shown as a movement through the revaluation reserve to comply with the Companies Act 2006. Prior to 2005 unrealised gains and losses were included in the profit and loss account.

Deferred taxation

Deferred tax is provided in full on timing differences which result in an obligation at the balance sheet date to pay more tax, or a right to pay less tax, at a future date, at rates expected to apply when they crystallise based on current tax rates and law. Timing differences arise from the inclusion of items of income and expenditure in taxation computations in periods different from those in which they are included in financial statements. Deferred tax is not provided on timing differences arising from the revaluation of fixed assets where there is no commitment to sell the asset. Deferred tax assets are recognised to the extent that it is regarded as more likely than not that they will be recovered. Deferred tax assets and liabilities are not discounted.

Leases

Assets acquired under finance leases are capitalised as tangible fixed assets at their fair value and depreciated over the shorter of their lease terms and their useful economic lives. Finance charges are allocated over the period of the lease rentals in proportion to the capital element outstanding.

Operating lease rentals are charged/credited over the lease term on a straight line basis.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Year ended 31 December 2011

2. TURNOVER

Turnover, which all arises in the UK, comprises the following exclusive of VAT:

	2011 £	2010 £
Subscriptions	131,927	122,781
Post boxes rental (including Birmingham Letter Exchange)	18,075	14,773
Lectures and courses	67,708	70,581
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	217,710	208,135
	<hr/>	<hr/>

3. STAFF COSTS

None of the officers of the Society have received remuneration during the year ended 31st December 2011 (2010: nil).

The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year, all of whom were engaged in the administration of the Society's affairs, was 4 (2010: 3).

4. OTHER OPERATING COSTS

	2011 £	2010 £
Premises expenses	72,912	53,378
Computer expenses	15,375	15,775
Telephone and postages	6,506	5,540
Auditors' remuneration for audit services	1,200	1,200
Professional charges	7,687	8,479
Incidentals	584	1,895
Grants and prizes	670	500
President's Dinner	(5,275)	(7,479)
Public relations	14,592	10,676
Legal Awards	(14,059)	(17,965)
Newly Qualified	(423)	(1,035)
Sponsors advertising re legal awards	3,451	3,456
Other events, travel and associated expenses	3,901	5,562
Bank charges	1,672	1,538
Bad and doubtful debts	-	(149)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	100,991	81,371
	<hr/>	<hr/>

5. SUMMARY OF OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	Members Support Including Library £	Document Exchange £	Lectures and Courses £	2011 Total £
Income	<u>131,927</u>	<u>18,075</u>	<u>67,708</u>	<u>217,710</u>
Costs:				
External Charges	30,421	-	10,141	40,562
Staff Costs	70,832	-	23,611	94,443
Depreciation	4,275	-	1,425	5,700
Other Operating Charges	<u>75,743</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,248</u>	<u>100,991</u>
	<u>181,271</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>60,425</u>	<u>241,696</u>
(Loss) on operating activities	<u>(49,344)</u>	<u>18,075</u>	<u>7,283</u>	<u>(23,986)</u>

	Members Support Including Library £	Document Exchange £	Lectures and Courses £	2010 Total £
Income	<u>122,781</u>	<u>14,773</u>	<u>70,581</u>	<u>208,135</u>
Costs:				
External Charges	30,542	-	15,271	45,813
Staff Costs	52,902	-	33,925	86,827
Depreciation	3,879	-	1,939	5,818
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	(718)	-	(359)	(1,077)
Other Operating Charges	<u>54,247</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>27,124</u>	<u>81,371</u>
	<u>140,852</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>77,900</u>	<u>218,752</u>
(Loss) on operating activities	<u>(18,071)</u>	<u>14,773</u>	<u>(7,319)</u>	<u>(10,617)</u>

Staff costs are allocated according to the costs of staff working directly on the relevant activities and property costs are allocated according to the numbers of staff engaged on each activity. Other costs have either been specifically identified or apportioned on an appropriate basis to each activity.

Included in the above is £1,707 (2010: £1,744) in respect of operating lease rentals for hire of plant and machinery.

6. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2011 £	2010 £
Income from Stock Exchange listed investments	4,638	4,680
Bank interest	<u>899</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>5,537</u>	<u>4,680</u>

7. INTEREST PAYABLE

	2011 £	2010 £
Interest on finance leases	1,673	1,673
	<u>1,673</u>	<u>1,673</u>

8. TAX ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES

	2011 £	2010 £
Corporation tax:		
Tax charge on ordinary activities at 20.25% (2010: 21%)	6,100	8,100
Adjustment in respect of previous years	(547)	-
	<u>5,553</u>	<u>8,100</u>

The standard rate of tax for the year, based on the UK standard rate of corporation tax, is 20.25%. The actual tax charge for the current year and the previous period differs from the standard rate for the reasons set out in the following reconciliation:

	2011 £	2010 £
Profit / (loss) on ordinary activities before taxation	<u>30,470</u>	<u>44,353</u>
Tax charge on ordinary activities at standard rate	6,170	9,314
Factors affecting charge for the year:		
Income not taxable for corporation tax purposes	(939)	(654)
Timing differences on items qualifying for capital allowances	786	803
Corporation tax losses	-	(1,403)
Rounding of corporation tax provisions	83	40
Adjustment in respect of previous year	<u>(547)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total actual amount of current tax	<u>5,553</u>	<u>8,100</u>

The company has taxation losses of approximately £400,000 (2010: £402,000) carried forward and available for set off against any future operating surplus but not against investment or property income. A deferred tax asset in respect of the taxation losses carried forward has not been recognised on the grounds that there is insufficient evidence that the losses will be recoverable in the foreseeable future. In the event that it is possible to forecast the availability of sufficient taxable profits, a deferred tax asset will be included in the financial statements. The estimated value of the deferred tax asset not recognised, measured at a tax rate of 20.25%, is £80,000 (2010: £83,000).

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Furniture, Computers and Equipment £
Cost	
At 1st January 2011	74,894
Additions during year	<u>5,448</u>
At 31st December 2011	<u>80,342</u>
Depreciation	
At 1st January 2011	62,780
Charge for year	<u>5,700</u>
At 31st December 2011	<u>68,480</u>
Net book value	
At 31st December 2011	<u><u>11,862</u></u>
At 31st December 2010	<u><u>12,114</u></u>

The closing net book value includes £3,869 (2010: £5,469) in respect of assets held under finance leases.

10. INVESTMENTS

	2011 £
Listed UK Stock Exchange investments	
Valuation at 1st January 2011	142,870
Additions	56,737
Sales proceeds	(26,205)
Realised (losses)	(303)
Revaluation – unrealised gains	(7,759)
	<u></u>
Valuation at 31st December 2011	165,340
Movement in uninvested cash	(33,405)
	<u><u>131,935</u></u>
Historical cost	<u><u>132,259</u></u>

10. INVESTMENTS

This investment forms part of the proceeds received from the sale of the Society's collection of antiquarian and/or text books. An ordinary resolution passed on 23rd November 2000 by the Society provided that the net proceeds (excluding any interest earned thereon) should only be used for capital expenditure purposes.

The authority conferred on the Officers of the Council by the above resolution was subsequently extended to allow the net proceeds to be used for additional purposes provided that such authority is exercised with prior approval of the Council of the Society and such terms are subject to such conditions as the Council may specify.

11. DEBTORS

	2011 £	2010 £
Trade debtors	107,772	108,712
Other debtors	14,716	12,648
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>22,036</u>	<u>14,399</u>
All amounts are due within one year.	<u>144,524</u>	<u>135,759</u>

12. CURRENT ASSET PROPERTY HELD FOR RESALE

	2011 £	2010 £
Balance as at 31st December 2010 and as at 31st December 2011	<u>23,043</u>	<u>23,043</u>

In the opinion of the directors the value of the Society's building and the site on which it stands is substantially in excess of that at which it is shown on the balance sheet.

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2011 £	2010 £
Unsecured loans	300	300
Obligations under finance leases	1,333	2,667
Trade creditors	34,908	21,816
Taxation and social security	8,912	11,359
Accruals and deferred income	<u>169,452</u>	<u>147,241</u>
	<u>214,905</u>	<u>183,383</u>

Unsecured loans are interest free and repayable on demand.

14. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	2011	2010
	£	£
Obligations under finance leases	<u>-</u>	<u>1,333</u>

15. BORROWINGS

Total borrowings are repayable as follows:

	2011	2010
	£	£
Finance leases		
Within one year	1,333	2,667
Between one and two years	<u>-</u>	<u>1,333</u>
	<u>1,333</u>	<u>4,000</u>

16. RESERVES

	Accumulated Fund	Revaluation Reserve
	£	£
Balance at beginning of year	140,048	30,724
Unrealised gain on trade investments	-	(7,759)
Profit / (loss) for year	<u>24,917</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>140,048</u>	<u>22,965</u>

The Accumulated Fund represents an amalgamation of various sundry funds contributed by members over the years together with surpluses and less deficits arising. The distribution of the income and property of the Society is restricted by the Memorandum of Association.

17. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

Operating lease commitments

At 31st December 2011 the company was committed to making the following payments during the next year:

	Land and buildings		Other	
	2011	2010	2011	2010
	£	£	£	£
Leases which expire:				
Within one year	9,625	-	-	-
Within one to two years	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,304</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>9,625</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,304</u>	<u>-</u>

18. CONTROLL

The company, being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital divided into shares, is controlled by the Officers of the Society.

19. MEMBERSHIP

Each member guarantees during their membership and for one year after membership ceases a sum up to £10 to the Society in the event of a winding up order.

20. APB ETHICAL STANDARD - PROVISIONS AVAILABLE FOR SMALL ENTITIES

In common with many other businesses of our size and nature we use our auditors to prepare and submit returns to the tax authorities and assist with the preparation of the financial statements.

21. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES**Shepherds Consultancy Limited**

During the year ended 31st December 2011 the Birmingham Law Society purchased services amounting to £nil (2010: £1,000) from Shepherds Consultancy Limited, a company in which B R M Shepherd, an officer of the Society, has a beneficial interest.

As at 31st December 2011 a total of £nil (2010: £1,000) was due from the Birmingham Law Society to Shepherds Consultancy Limited.

During the year ended 31 December 2011, the President D Parnell, received an honorarium in the sum of £1,500.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The additional information relating to the prize funds on page 29 has been prepared from the accounting records of the company. While it does not form part of the statutory financial statements, it should be read in conjunction with them and the responsibilities section of the auditors' report thereon.

PRIZE FUNDS for year ended 31 December 2009

	2011 £	2010 £
THOMAS HORTON PRIZE FUND CAPITAL		
Charities Official Investment Fund 283 Income shares at cost	<u>271</u>	<u>271</u>
INCOME		
Interest received during year	126	122
Less: Gold Medal Prize	<u>(250)</u>	<u>(250)</u>
Deficiency transferred to Income and Expenditure account	<u>(124)</u>	<u>(128)</u>
T FOSTER DUGGAN STUDENTS' PRIZE CAPITAL		
£520 5½ % Treasury Stock 2009/12 (redeemed on 9th September 2009)		
Redemption value	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
INCOME		
Interest received during year	-	-
Less: Bronze Medal Prize	<u>(100)</u>	<u>(100)</u>
Deficiency transferred to Income and Expenditure account	<u>(100)</u>	<u>(100)</u>
HERBERT WILLISON PRIZE FUND CAPITAL		
Charities Official Investment Fund		
241 Income shares at cost	<u>250</u>	<u>250</u>
Income balance at beginning of year	2,149	2,095
Interest received during year	<u>107</u>	<u>104</u>
	2,199	2,199
Less: Book Prize	<u>(50)</u>	<u>(50)</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>2,206</u>	<u>2,149</u>
PETER NICHOLLS PRIZE FUND		
Balance at start of year	50	100
Less: Book prize	<u>(50)</u>	<u>(50)</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>-</u>	<u>50</u>

Accountants' Report to the members of The Birmingham Law Society

In accordance with your instructions, we have compiled the unaudited financial statements set out above from the accounting records and explanations supplied to us.

J W Hinks, Chartered Accountants, Birmingham
28th March 2012

PRESIDENTS:

THOMAS LEE	1818	GEORGE CORBYN BARROW	1952
JOHN MEREDITH	1825	CECIL HAMMOND COX	1953
JOHN SIMCOX	1832	THOMAS BERNARD SMITH	1954
ROGER WILLIAM GEM	1833	JOHN ALBERT CALTHROP TAYLOR	1955
THOMAS EYRE LEE	1848	PHILIP HORTON VERNON	1956
CLEMENT INGLEBY	1852	GEOFFREY MARTEN KING	1957
JOHN WELCHMAN WHATELEY	1855	GEORGE MANNING BUTTS	1958
ARTHUR RYLAND	1873	JOSEPH KENNETH WALKER	1959
GEORGE JAMES JOHNSON	1874	RODERICK SYDNEY KING-FARLOW	1960
ARTHUR RYLAND	1876	WILLIAM HENRY TILLEY	1960
WILLIAM EVANS	1877	JOHN SHUFFLEBOTHAM	1962
JAMES MARIGOLD	1879	FREDERICK WILLIAM WHITALL OAKLEY	1963
THOMAS HORTON	1882	CHARLES THOMAS WINTERTON	1964
CHARLES EDWARD MATTHEWS	1885	RICHARD LAURENCE EKIN	1965
CORNELIUS THOMAS SAUNDERS	1888	GEOFFREY HORACE PIDDOCK	1966
SIR THOMAS MARTINEAU	1888	HAROLD FREDERICK ROGERS	1967
LAURISTON WINTERBOTHAM LEWIS	1891	CHRISTOPHER HEDLEY HARMER	1968
JOSEPH BENNETT CLARKE	1893	THOMAS HARRY PARKINSON	1969
ARTHUR GODLEE	1895	CHARLES HERBERT LEA	1970
THOMAS HAWKES RUSSELL	1897	JOHN ATKINSON RUTLEDGE	1970
JOSEPH ANSELL	1899	SYDNEY SOLOMON JACOBS	1972
RICHARD ALFRED PINSENT	1901	JOHN TIMOTHY ARTHUR SMITH	1973
JOHN BARHAM CARSLAKE	1903	JOHN ANTONY ALDERSON	1974
ALFRED POINTON	1906	DAVID LIDDELL	1975
WALTER BARROW	1908	WALTER WOOD	1976
JOHN GILBERT BRADBURY	1910	DAVID STANLEY ADAMS	1977
ALFRED HENRY COLEY	1912	ROBERT JOSEPH GARRATT	1978
JAMES HARGREAVE	1914	GEORGE SIEGFRIED JONAS	1979
ARTHUR LABRON LOWE	1916	DENYS ERIC FORDHAM	1980
FRANCIS AUGUST CHATWIN	1918	ROGER HORTON VERNON	1980
ARCHIBALD SOMERVILLE BENNETT	1919	ARNOLD MAURICE PUTSMAN	1982
JAMES ARTHUR MARIGOLD	1920	CHRISTOPHER JOHN JAMES	1983
EDWARD EVERSLED	1921	FREDERICK HAROLD TURNER	1984
THOMAS COOKSEY	1922	PETER LESLIE TAYLOR	1985
CHARLES EKIN	1923	BRIAN EDWARD GLYNN WILLIAMS	1986
JOSEPH JAMES	1924	JOHN RICHARD BETTINSON	1987
FRANCIS HENRY PEPPER	1925	DAVID HOWARD HIGGS	1988
RICHARD ALFRED PINSENT	1926	CHRISTOPHER WYNDHAM HUGHES	1989
CORNELIUS HALE SAUNDERS	1927	PHILIP EDWARD RICHARDSON	1990
HUGH BARHAM CARSLAKE	1928	CHARLES RODERICK KING-FARLOW	1990
GEORGE HUGGINS	1929	JOHN ADRIAN JAMES AUCOTT	1992
GEORGE ARTHUR CHARLES PETTITT	1930	STANLEY BERNARD SHORTT	1993
LESLIE ARTHUR SMITH	1931	JOHN MICHAEL BUCKINGHAM	1994
SYDNEY VERNON	1932	ALBERT WILLIAM HEASELGRAVE	1995
GEORGE ARTHUR CHARLES PETTITT	1933	RICHARD DUDLEY CHAPMAN	1996
WILFRED CLARKSON MATTHEWS	1934	MICHAEL DAVID HUMPHREY SHEPHERD	1997
FRANK HENRY CUFAUDE WILTSHIRE	1935	MALCOLM GASKELL FOWLER	1998
LESLIE ARTHUR SMITH	1937	TREVOR ARTHUR LEE	1999
HERBERT WILLIAM LYDE	1938	JAYNE BELINDA WILLETTS	2000
JOSEPH THOMAS HIGGS	1939	MICHAEL JAMES WARD	2001
GEORGE HAROLD WILLCOX	1941	ANTHONY RALPH COLLINS	2002
ARTHUR JOHN GATELEY	1943	DIANE PATRICIA BENUSSI	2003
JOHN FREDERICK WEST	1945	STEVEN MICHAEL JONAS	2004
WILLIAM CHARLES COLEMAN GELL	1946	RICHARD THOMAS FOLLIS	2005
CHARLES ADRIAN ASHFORD ELTON	1947	PHILIP DUNKLEY STEEL	2006
JOHN FAIRFAX CROWDER	1948	SUKHDEV SINGH BHOMRA	2007
JOHN HENRY SQUIRE ADDISON	1949	CAROLINE AMANDA COATES	2008
GEORGE ARTHUR LYON HATTON	1950	BERNARD ROBERT	2009
CYRIL HIGHWAY	1950	MCWALTER SHEPHERD	
		DEAN CURTIS PARNELL	2010

HONORARY SECRETARIES AND TREASURERS:

CLEMENT INGLEBY	1818	
WILLIAM REDFERN	1829	
ARTHUR RYLAND	1832	
THOMAS SMITH JAMES	1835	
WILLIAM HARE	1852	
CLEMENT MANSFIELD INGLEBY	1853	
EDWARD SARGANT	1857	
GEORGE JAMES JOHNSON	1865	
THOMAS HORTON	1872	
ARTHUR GODLEE	1882	
THOMAS HAWKES RUSSELL	1889	
WALTER BARROW	1897	
EDWARD EVERSHERD	1903	
CHARLES EKIN	1909	
LESLIE ARTHUR SMITH	1913	
ARTHUR MUSGROVE	1916	
WILFRED CLARKSON MATTHEWS	1921	
WILLIAM CHARLES COLEMAN GELL	1927	
JOHN FAIRFAX CROWDER	1932	
JOHN FAIRFAX CROWDER	Joint 1936	
GEORGE CORBYN BARROW		
GEORGE CORBYN BARROW	1945	
GEORGE CORBYN BARROW	Joint 1946	
PHILIP HORTON VERNON		
PHILIP HORTON VERNON	1947	
PHILIP HORTON VERNON	Joint 1949	
GEORGE MANNING BUTTS		
GEORGE MANNING BUTTS	1955	
GEORGE MANNING BUTTS	Joint 1955	
HAROLD FREDERICK ROGERS		
HAROLD FREDERICK ROGERS	Joint 1956	
DAVID CHARLES STEVENS		
DAVID CHARLES STEVENS	Joint 1958	
MICHAEL PAUL CHETWYND HAYES		
MICHAEL PAUL CHETWYND HAYES	1961	
MICHAEL PAUL CHETWYND HAYES	Joint 1967	
JOHN RICHARD BETTINSON		
JOHN RICHARD BETTINSON	1968	

HONORARY SECRETARIES:

JOHN RICHARD BETTINSON	Joint	1970
JOHN MICHAEL JENNINGS		
JOHN MICHAEL JENNINGS	Joint	1971
ANTONY DERBYSHIRE		
ANTONY DERBYSHIRE	Joint	1972
ROGER HORTON VERNON		
ROGER HORTON VERNON		1976
ROGER HORTON VERNON	Joint	1977
CHRISTOPHER WYNDHAM HUGHES		
CHRISTOPHER WYNDHAM HUGHES	Joint	1978
CHRISTOPHER JOHN JAMES		
CHRISTOPHER WYNDHAM HUGHES	Joint	1980
PHILIP EDWARD RICHARDSON		
PHILIP EDWARD RICHARDSON	Joint	1983
PAUL GRENVILLE PHARAOH		
PAUL GRENVILLE PHARAOH	Joint	1987
JOHN ANTHONY JAMES		
JOHN ANTHONY JAMES	Joint	1988
JOHN MICHAEL BUCKINGHAM		
JOHN MICHAEL BUCKINGHAM	Joint	1991
RICHARD DUDLEY CHAPMAN		
RICHARD DUDLEY CHAPMAN	Joint	1992
MALCOLM GASKELL FOWLER		
JUDITH MARGARET BONEGAL	Joint	1994
PETER DAVID WISEMAN		
PETER DAVID WISEMAN	Joint	May - Sept 2002
STEVEN MICHAEL JONAS		
PETER DAVID WISEMAN	Joint	Sept 2002
MARK JONATHAN BEESLEY		
PETER DAVID WISEMAN	Joint	June 2004
ANDREW RICHARD LEWIS BOND		
ANDREW JOHN LANCASTER	Joint	April 2008
HELEN JANE ARNOLD		
JON LLOYD	Joint	April 2009
KEITH BROWNE	Joint	April 2010

HONORARY TREASURERS

JOHN FRANK LESTER	1970
JAMES EDWARD ROWLEY	1973
KENNETH JOHN WERRING	1977
CHARLES RODERICK KING-FARLOW	1979
CHARLES JAMES BRAGG FLINT	1985
GRAHAM RUSSELL RITCHIE	1986
MICHAEL JAMES WARD	1992
MILTON NICHOLAS PSYLLIDES	1999
ANDREW JEFFREY STILTON	2004
RICHARD STEER	2008
MARTIN ALLSOPP	2009

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

1. WE ENCOURAGE CLOSER CONTACT BETWEEN MEMBERS THEREBY STRENGTHENING THE REGIONAL LEGAL COMMUNITY

- by providing a programme for members including networking and activity based events;
- by holding public debates/discussions which are important to members;
- by establishing and maintaining effective lines of communication with all members.

2. WE REPRESENT THE PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR MEMBERS

- by direct representations and lobbying to Government, the SRA, The Law Society and other organisations;
- by engaging in consultations;
- by making use of the media.

3. WE PROMOTE THE SOCIETY, OUR MEMBERS AND THE REGION ON THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STAGE

- by ensuring members are aware of the work which is undertaken by the Society;
- by ensuring all Officers, Board Members and Council Members promote the Society and its members whenever speaking to national or international organisations, including during international visits;
- by promoting the international relations the Society has and establishing links.

4. WE ENSURE OUR MEMBERS ARE KEPT UP TO DATE WITH ANY IMPORTANT ISSUES RELEVANT TO THE LEGAL PROFESSION

- by using any and all available means (electronic, seminars, newsletters, correspondence etc);
- by engaging in public debates/discussions with people associated with such changes;
- through training and other educational events.

5. WE RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF LEGAL ISSUES RELEVANT TO THE PROFESSION

- by promoting the rule of law and access to justice
- by raising issues relevant to the provision of legal services such as Alternative Business Structures, cuts in legal aid, diversity issues in respect of access to the legal profession etc;

6. WE ARE REGARDED AS AN INTEGRAL AND IMPORTANT PART OF BIRMINGHAM AND SURROUNDING REGIONS BY ENSURING CLOSE LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS (BOTH LEGAL AND NON LEGAL) INCLUDING;

- a. national organisations such as The Law Society;
- b. local organisations such as Universities, Chamber of Commerce, Birmingham Forward, Business Voice WM, PINWM etc;
- c. local organisations involved in the administration of justice such as the Judiciary/Tribunals and the Police;
- d. Birmingham Trainee Solicitors Group and Birmingham Solicitors Group;
- e. Pro bono groups and charities.

7. WE CONTINUOUSLY CONSIDER PROVIDING SERVICES THAT BENEFIT OUR MEMBERS.

March 2011



Birmingham Law Society

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