

# 70 Years

1949-2019



Law Society of Scotland

**1865** The Procurators (Scotland) Act.

**1873** The Law Agents (Scotland) Act.

Significant legal milestones pre-Law Society of Scotland

**1919** The Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act allowed women to become lawyers for the first time.



**1932** *Donoghue v Stevenson* was a landmark court decision in Scots delict law and English tort law by the House of Lords. It laid the foundation of the modern law of negligence, establishing general principles of the duty of care.

**1945** Between 1945 and 1948 legislation was introduced to create a welfare state, including the **National Health Service Act in 1948**.

## 1949 The Law Society of Scotland is established

The **Legal Aid and Solicitors (Scotland) Act** represented a watershed in Scottish legal history. After the war, the idea of a general regulatory council for solicitors was revitalised. The Act created the Law Society of Scotland and introduced legal aid and advice.

**1950**

The **Scottish Law Directory** was produced for the first time, listing every solicitor in Scotland. Known affectionately as the 'white book' it is still produced annually.



**1949**

**Ernest Wedderburn** became the Law Society of Scotland's first President. The original office was at **Law Society's Hall, North Bank Street, Edinburgh**.



**1953**

The **European Convention on Human Rights** came into force.



**1956**

The first ever edition of the **Law Society's Journal** magazine was printed.



## 1930 - 1985

Solicitors were not allowed to advertise their services without risk of disciplinary action by the Law Society. There was a statutory scale of fees, meaning all solicitors charged the same amount for conveyancing work.

**1959**

Apprenticeships were introduced for trainee solicitors.



**1950s**

Fax machines began to be used by solicitors, speeding up processes and transactions.

### Did you know?

The Law Society of Scotland's Latin motto which appears on the coat of arms translates as 'I consider nothing of human affairs to be alien to me'. The Latin comes from a quote by the character Chermes in a play called *Heauton Timorumenos* by Terence, a dramatist of the Roman Republic. The play was originally published in 163 BC.

**1969**

The Law Society moved to **Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh**.



**1972**

The **European Communities Act 1972**.

### Did you know?

'Solicitor' is a word of French origin, probably from the 14th century. 'Sollicitor' was in use in the Roman curia, and is found in various medieval texts.



**1980s**

Computers began to be used by solicitors, speeding up processes.

**1980**

The **Solicitors (Scotland) Act** consolidated the earlier 20th-century legislation. It provides the statutory basis for the Law Society as well as complaints and disciplinary proceedings for solicitors amongst other things.

The **Diploma in Professional Legal Practice** was introduced along with the traineeship. Apprenticeships were abolished.

**1985**

Scale fees abolished and price competition began. For the first time solicitors were allowed to advertise their services.

**1986**

The creation of the Scottish Legal Aid Board in 1986 - the **Legal Aid (Scotland) Act 1986**



**1988**

The **Solicitors (Scotland) Act** enabled the Law Society to deal with service complaints.

**1990**

The **Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act** created Solicitor Advocates who were allowed to appear in the higher courts. The Scottish Conveyancing and Executries Board was created.



**1991**

**Registered Foreign Lawyers** were introduced to allow a single practice to operate north and south of the border.



**2000s**

Social media became a key part in many law firms' marketing strategies.

**1998**

The **Scotland Act** made provision for a Scottish government of ministers and a Scottish Parliament to which they would be accountable.

The **Human Rights Act** brought the human rights contained in the European Convention on Human Rights under the jurisdiction of UK courts.

**2003**

The **Public Appointments and Public Bodies etc. (Scotland) Act** saw the Law Society of Scotland taking over the Scottish Conveyancing and Executries Board.

The **Functions of the Council of the Law Society of Scotland Act** meant that the Council could delegate powers to committees.



**2005**

**Caroline Flanagan** became the Law Society of Scotland's first female President.

The creation of the UK Supreme Court - the **Constitutional Reform Act 2005**.

**2006**

The 'Find a Solicitor' website was launched, listing every practising Scottish solicitor.

**2007**

The **Legal Profession and Legal Aid (Scotland) Act** created the Scottish Legal Complaints Commission, meaning service complaints against solicitors would be removed from the Law Society of Scotland.

**2010**

The **Legal Services (Scotland) Act** allows for the regulation of alternative business structures.



**2015**

The Law Society moved to **Atria One, Morrison Street, Edinburgh**.

**2016**

The **Lawscot Foundation** was launched to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds realise their dream of becoming a solicitor.

**2017**

The 'Find a Solicitor' website was relaunched, listing every practising Scottish solicitor by location and type of law. It had over 500,000 visits that year.



**2018**

**Journal** magazine was given a new look and feel.

The **European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018**.



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