



Merry Christmas



Issue 77
December 2024
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SOLAS President



David Hamilton

Dear Members,

I hope this message finds everyone well.

It was a great privilege to take on the role of National President on the 2nd November 2024 and I very much look forward to the next two years. I want to thank Natalie Cooke for everything she has done for SOLAS during her time as President and wish her well for the future as she continues her role as President for Edinburgh Branch.

For those of you who do not know me, I have been a SOLAS member since 2011 and part of the Glasgow Committee since 2019, initially as a general member and then taking over as Vice President. From there I accepted a role on the General Council in 2020 and started lecturing on the Feeing Course for the Education Board in 2024. It is fair to say I have been busy over the last couple of years but receiving the opportunity to work with so many excellent individuals within the Society has made it all worthwhile. If you are interested in joining one of the local branches, I cannot recommend this highly enough as it is a fantastic way to increase your knowledge and network.

Over the next two years we have ambitious plans for the Society. Those of you who attended the AGM in Aberdeen will have an idea of these already but for the rest I will speak a bit more below. The plan is to modernise the SOLAS platform to ensure it keeps up pace with other similar organisations. We envisage that by next year our members will have an online self-service portal which will allow you to access materials, participate in CPD, make payments, and more importantly submit your CPD without the need for paper/PDF forms. This should make the running of SOLAS much more efficient and allow for a better user experience overall. I would ask everyone to embrace the new technology we introduce, and rest assured that help will always be on hand for anyone worried about the introduction of these new processes.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Aberdeen Branch for hosting and organising this year's AGM and dinner. This was a big birthday for Aberdeen and saw the branch mark its 70th

year. The format this year was slightly different with the AGM taking place before the dinner as opposed to the morning after. The jury remains out on whether this is a better format, but everyone agreed attending the meeting less fuzzy headed had its benefits (if you have attended a meeting the morning after the dinner you will understand). Overall, this was another great night with many good memories made. I really encourage everyone to consider attending one of these events as it has never disappointed in the years I have been attending. The next AGM Dinner is in Dundee and is provisionally down for Saturday 8th November 2025. The date will be confirmed as early as possible next year.

Over the next two years (and beyond) I want to encourage as many members as possible to consider attending our events in person. With the move to online after the pandemic I feel we have lost the opportunity to network properly and build the longstanding relationships that our senior members have enjoyed over the years. The main opportunities for this are the National seminars and the AGM Dinner so please take the opportunity to attend if possible.

Finally, I want to thank you our members for your continued commitment, and everyone who works behind the scenes to keep SOLAS ticking over smoothly. The branches, Education Board, and General Council put in an incredible amount of work throughout the year to ensure members and students receive a first-class service. As mentioned earlier, if you can get involved, please give this serious consideration. A final special thank you must also go to our wonderful administrators Lorraine MacLeod and Shirley Sargent. Lorraine oversees the administration of the members and Shirley the students on the Education side. It is fair to say that while I have given credit to others above, the Society would not operate as well without these two.

As the festive season approaches, I hope you all take time to relax and recharge for the year ahead. I am confident that 2025 will be an exciting and productive year for SOLAS, and I look forward to seeing what we can achieve together.

Best wishes,

David



Administrator

Here we are again, heading towards the end of the year. The years seem to be passing a lot quicker and I know now what my mother meant! It's been a busy but enjoyable year. We have had some great feedback about the new way of delivering CPD. The Webinars are seeing over 200 members attending, which is far more than used to attend.

Shirley Sargent (Education Administrator) and I attended a Chamber of Commerce event in Inverness to promote SOLAS. It was a great success as we could explain what SOLAS is all about and I have a long list of Solicitors who would be interested in coming to our Seminars!

Here is a list of approximate dates when emails will be sent out during the year.

February	First/Second Week	March seminar (online)
May	Late	Evening Course enrolment
June/July	Late/Early	Newsletter
August	First/Second Week	September seminar
August		Annual Dinner & AGM
September		CPD reminder
December		Newsletter

I am pleased to say that there has been a very good return of subs/CPDs. Please remember that 2 hours of Structured must include SOLAS Webinars/Seminars. Any member who has not met the deadline date of 31st December, will be sent a 14 day letter with a late payment fee of £10. If we don't have any correspondence from you after the 14 day period I will be on the phone to you!

During October a diary was sent out to all members who had previously requested one. Going forward I will be handing out the diaries at the September Seminar and the Dinner/AGM in November as the price of postage has increased considerably. If you are unable to attend these events and require a diary, I will post them out at the end of October/beginning of November. Please let me know if you no longer wish to receive a diary.

Upcoming Seminars are as follows: -

Dundee Branch	4 th December 2024	The Trust Registration Service
Aberdeen Branch	30 th January 2025	Melissa Blackwood, LawWare The importance of good practice management software to aid compliance
Glasgow Branch	19 th February 2025	Sarah Jane MacDonald WJM LLP
National Seminar	19 th March 2025	Law Society Update
Branch AGM	April 2025	
Aberdeen Branch	28 th May 2025	Robbie Chisholm Tweed Wealth Management Inheritance Tax in 2025
Edinburgh Branch	June 2025	
Glasgow Branch	26 th August 2025	Alan Cameron, Jackson Boyd Why preparation and conduct of case Really matters in Sheriff court Case?
National Seminar	17 th September 2025	Private Client
Dundee Branch	October 2025	

One of our retired members, Cathie Purves has asked me to include the message below.

RETIRED MEMBERS LUNCH

I understand there are around 90 retired members and thought it would be nice to have a lunch so we can all meet and catch up with each other.

My thoughts are midweek in Perth around March/April.

Let me know if you would be interested so I have an idea of numbers and if you have any suggestions.

Thanks

Cathie Purves

Email cath_4_u@yahoo.co.uk

Shirley Sargent has received some feedback from the students who have just completed the Cashroom module and I've included some of the comments below.

58 sat the exam and 58 passed! Great result!

Comments from students

The quality of the Cash-room module was excellent and covered all aspects of the daily duties involved when working in a legal cash-room

I gained a deeper understanding of the rules, I understood the lessons very well and the lecturer was knowledgeable, supportive, and engaging. I would rate it 10/10

I would rate the overall quality of this module 100%. It was extremely relevant to my role and the lecturer was very helpful and very good at breaking down all the information and teaching.

The module was delivered at a perfect pace. Overall, I understood the lessons very well with just the odd lesson which took a little longer to get my head around

The lecturer knew her stuff well and brought some humour to the class

I understood the lessons very well and the addition of spot questions during class kept me on my toes with revision!

I would 100% recommend to others. My tutor was fabulous. It was good to gain in-depth knowledge/the reasons behind why we do what we do in the cash-room

The lecturer was fantastic. As someone who has never worked in a cash-room, the lecturer made it relatable and explained things very well. It wasn't as terrifying as I thought it would be!!

I hope you all have a lovely Christmas and New Year.

Lorraine MacLeod

Administrator



Branch Reports

Aberdeen

We held our graduation dinner on 2nd October 2024 with Heather Garvock, Kirsty Walker and Claudia Spencer receiving their diplomas , unfortunately Margaret Cusworth lives in Spain and was unable to join us , we extend a warm SOLAS welcome to you all.

Aberdeen Branch held our 70th Anniversary dinner & AGM on 2nd November 2024 in The Copthorne Hotel, Aberdeen , we shook things up this year and had the AGM and dinner on the same day , we got very positive feedback from the members that attended . It was a great night, and as always great to catch up with other SOLAS members. We welcomed our new President, David Hamilton and Vice President Nikki Scott at the AGM .











As I have said before, geography plays a big part in our branch but with national CPD now available on Microsoft Teams we are definitely seeing more people attend these sessions. CPD meetings continue to be provided by all 4 branches and you can join in any branch CPD meetings. If anyone has any suggestions for topics or speakers that could provide a talk, please let me know.

Your branch is here to work for you, please help by supporting us.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2025 and look forward to seeing you all next year.

Best wishes

Joyce



Dundee

Dundee Branch

Firstly, I can't believe another year is coming to the end!

Dundee branch happily welcomed two graduates, Yasmin Anderson and Emily Welch, to our branch and we celebrated their achievement with dinner and drinks at The Gidi Grill. Jessica McCardle, who graduated in a previous year, has now met the requirements and joined Dundee Branch this year. She is jumping in with both feet and also becoming a member of the committee. It will be fabulous to have some fresh input!

We are sad to see Natasha Mitchell retire from teaching the Executry Module and we thank her for her many years of dedication to first, the Dundee Branch executry classes and then, the joint online classes. I think I speak for all of us when I say her depth of knowledge and experience in teaching executries will be sorely missed!

A few of us from Dundee Branch attended the AGM and Dinner Dance hosted by Aberdeen. It was a wonderful time and great to visit with old friends and new and I would like to thank Aberdeen Branch for their kind hospitality.

On that note, Dundee Branch will be hosting the AGM and Dinner Dance next year and if anyone has any ideas or suggestions, please let me know.

Happy Holidays to all of you and your loved ones. May the New Year bring you happiness, joy, and good health.

Nikki Scott
President of Dundee Branch



Edinburgh

The Edinburgh Branch has had an eventful few months since our last newsletter. In October, we proudly hosted our branch graduation ceremony at the Law Society offices in Edinburgh. The celebration was well-attended, with 38 participants, including almost all of the 14 graduates and with 10 new members joining SOLAS. Certificates were presented by Paul McRobb and Nikki Scott, who now serves as Vice President of SOLAS. The evening was a memorable occasion, complemented by refreshments as we celebrated the achievements of our new graduates with their friends and family.

In November, we had the pleasure of attending the Aberdeen Branch Annual Dinner & AGM on Saturday, 2nd November 2024, at The Copthorne Hotel, Aberdeen. It was wonderful to reconnect with so many familiar faces and meet new colleagues.

Additionally, in September, Paul McRobb from the Edinburgh Branch participated in the Falkirk Legal Walk, raising funds for the Access to Justice Foundation.

The Edinburgh Branch, together with Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen, has put significant effort into organising a series of seminars over the past 12 months, with strong attendance reflecting their success. Topics covered included the Trust Registration Service (TRS) by Gerry MacCrossan, Terms, Transparency, and Trust with Susan McElvaine Williams, and 'Human Error at Work' with Greg Fradd. Dale Trahms and Jenni Rodgers discussed regulatory obligations and risk mitigation, while Morna Ronnie addressed menopause in the workplace and Gregor Angus focused on Anti-Money Laundering regulation. SJ Macdonald provided insights into the Trust & Succession (Scotland) Act 2024, and Catherine Hart led sessions on mental well-being and data protection. Aleks Tomczyk presented on The Bereavement Index, an annual study exploring the processes involved in bereavement in the UK. Finally, Allan Hume captivated the audience with his discussion on unclaimed assets and the risks of 'Brits and their missing billions.' These seminars have significantly broadened our members' knowledge on a wide range of relevant and timely topics.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Natalie Cooke for her dedication and hard work as SOLAS President over the past two years. Everyone at the Edinburgh branch is incredibly proud of Natalie's achievements and commitment. We would also like to congratulate David Hamilton from the Glasgow Branch on his appointment as the new President.

If you have suggestions for seminars, please email EdinburghBranch@SOLAS.org.uk. We also welcome expressions of interest from

those looking to join the Edinburgh Committee. Committee involvement is not time-intensive; we hold brief, occasional meetings and exchange a few emails each month. New members bring valuable perspectives, and we invite you to attend a meeting as a trial.

We have been working to enhance our social media presence to provide members with an easier way to stay informed about news and events, and we encourage everyone to get involved.

Warmest wishes for the festive season from me and the entire Edinburgh Committee including Melissa Blackwood, Lindsay Murray, Natalie Cooke, Mandy Gibb and Gillian Forsyth.

Paul McRobb

Photographs of the Graduation Ceremony









SOLAS Glasgow Branch



Committee News

Our very own David Hamilton is now President of SOLAS General Council. A huge congratulations from all of Glasgow Branch. I am sure he will be a welcomed addition and bring lots of positive changes for SOLAS.

The Committee would like to say a special thank-you to Eileen Hastie who is stepping down from the Committee. Eileen has been on the Committee for a number of years, holding many positions within SOLAS. Eileen has consistently gone above and beyond for SOLAS and will be sorely missed.

Euan Robertson has kindly agreed to take on Eileen's role of Treasurer for the branch and will no doubt take this in his stride



We Want You

Would you like to join the Glasgow Branch Committee?

This is a fantastic way to be part of SOLAS and contribute to an organisation which is run by the Members for the Members.

We hold four online Committee Meetings per year and host 2 In Person Events per year.

As part of the Committee you help the branch to organise CPD Events, AGM, Graduation Ceremony, Student Meet and Greet etc.

If you are enthusiastic and have new ideas that could be introduced to the Branch and SOLAS please join or team.

If anyone is interested in joining the committee, or has any new suggestions for the branch please contact us at GlasgowBranch@solas.org.uk



Branch CPD Meetings

The 2024-2025 syllabus is currently being drafted. If you have any CPD requests, please let us know. We would be keen to explore new topics and speakers, ensuring this meets our member's needs.

If the dates or CPD topics do not suit you, please let us know. If you would like something covered in CPD, the Committee will do its absolute best to allocate a speaker. As always, we want our Members to get the absolute best from their membership



SOLAS Glasgow Branch Student Graduation **Many Congratulations Class of 2024!!**

The above event was held at Glasgow Caledonian University on 24th October 2024. This was a fantastic event, and it was lovely to meet our Graduates, New Members and their family and friends.

The turnout for this event was fantastic and it was lovely to celebrate with a glass of bubbly and buffet and get to catch up with everyone.

Thank you for everyone who was in attendance and to the Glasgow Branch Committee for all their help in organising a successful event enjoyed by all. Here are some of the photos from the night:











Aberdeen Branch Annual Dinner and AGM

The above event was held at the Copthorne Hotel on Saturday 2nd November 2024.

This was a fabulous night, with thanks to the Aberdeen Branch, for hosting. It was a lovely meal with plenty of drinks and dancing.

It was lovely to catch up with everyone. Everyone looked amazing and a good night was had by all.

Thank you for everyone who was in attendance from Glasgow Branch. The support is much appreciated and does not go unnoticed.



Upcoming Events 2025

Glasgow Branch is looking to introduce Social Events/Nights etc. for Members to attend, network and meet up with friends and colleges, however we need you, our Members, to get involved.

Fancy a trip to McTears Auctioneers in Glasgow – McTears deals with Executry & Estate Sales in relation to valuations for Inheritance Tax and valuations for Insurance and Capital Gains Tax Planning. Glasgow Branch will run a bus to/from Glasgow City Centre and Members will receive tea/coffee/cake on the night.

Please look out for the flyer for this event and book your place. Not to be missed!



Season's Greetings

The Glasgow Branch Committee would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

See you all in 2025.



New Members Admitted

The Society warmly welcomes the undernoted students who were admitted as members at their General Council meeting on 2nd November 2024.

Associate

Kirsty Walker	Aberdeen
Heather Garvoch	Aberdeen
Claudia Spencer	Aberdeen

Yasmin Anderson	Dundee
Emily Welch	Dundee

Craig Church-Michael	Edinburgh
Fraser Clyne	Edinburgh
Gillian Fordyce	Edinburgh
Emma MacDonald	Edinburgh
Heather Masterman	Edinburgh
Nicole Markey	Edinburgh
Lia Sellar	Edinburgh
Imogen Tombling	Edinburgh
Brody Munro	Edinburgh
Kieran Tague	Edinburgh
Erika Kotyuk	Edinburgh

Wendy Murray	Glasgow
Caroline Lyons	Glasgow
Brenda Boyd	Glasgow
Ewan McCulloch	Glasgow
Stephanie Donnelly	Glasgow
Domenic Hamiton	Glasgow
Lewis McKenna	Glasgow
Kasey Manzie	Glasgow
Victoria Marlow	Glasgow
Rebecca McAteer	Glasgow
Laura Schiavone	Glasgow
Jula Falconer	Glasgow
John Clark	Glasgow
Hannah MacDonald	Glasgow



SOLAS Office Bearers

David Hamilton, President
Hamiltons Law Accountants Ltd.

Nikki Scott, Vice-President
Blackadders

Lindsay Murray, General Secretary
Brodies LLP
Edinburgh

Gillian Gray, General Treasurer
The Law Society of Scotland

General Council Members

Aberdeen

Blair Chalmers
Joyce Forbes
Jenny Hiscox, Andersonbain

Dundee

Heather Davidson, Rollos Law LLP
Nikki Scott, Blackadders
Lynne Alexander, W.M. Thomson & Sons

Edinburgh

Gillian Forsyth, Murray Beith Murray
Paul McRobb, Your Cashier

Glasgow

Euan Robertson, Jackson Boyd
Deborah Jaconelli, Friends Legal

Branch Secretaries

Aberdeen

Joyce Forbes, Your Cashier

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Dundee

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Melissa Blackwood, LawWare & Paul
McRobb, Your Cashier

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Glasgow

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 **The Society of Law Accountants in Scotland**

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