

Country Report for Scotland 2025

The Law Society of Scotland is the professional body for over 13000 Scottish solicitors and was established in 1949. [Our Strategy commits us to lead legal excellence](#), and aim to be a world-class professional body, understanding and serving the needs of our members and the public. As part of our regulatory duties, we set and uphold standards to ensure the provision of excellent legal services and ensure the public can have confidence in Scotland's legal profession.

There have been four key events over the past year:

- The passing of the Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Bil.
- The appointment of Ben Kemp as our new CEO.
- The Law Society of Scotland has developed a "Guide to Generative AI" for its members.
- The Law Society of Scotland has founded a new committee to oversee its international work.

For more information about our work, visit: <https://www.lawscot.org.uk/>

1. Passing of the Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Bil

The Bill represents the biggest shake up of the regulation of solicitors in well over a decade. It will introduce new forms of regulation over legal businesses, changes to the way complaints are handled, and introduce new restrictions over who can and cannot call themselves a lawyer.

A decade of campaigning by the Law Society of Scotland has resulted in new legislation that will better protect legal services consumers and benefit Scotland's legal sector.

Following its final approval by the Scottish Parliament on Tuesday 20th May the Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Bill will see the Law Society continue as the independent regulator of Scottish solicitors, while gaining new powers to act in the public interest.

These include broad new powers to regulate legal businesses and the ability to investigate complaints against solicitors more quickly. The Law Society will also have increased powers to suspend solicitors from practice.

A new legal offence of pretending to be a lawyer, in line with the existing offence of holding oneself out to be a solicitor, will provide clarity for consumers about those who have the knowledge and skills to provide legal services in Scotland. Importantly the Bill ensures the independence of the legal profession and regulatory processes.

The Law Society of Scotland has also now set out its initial approach to implementing the Scottish Parliament's landmark reforms to the way Scottish solicitors are regulated. In doing so, the Society has announced its decision to defer work on regulating new non-solicitor owned legal businesses for two years. This will allow the Society to focus on the required significant changes to improve the current complaints system for the benefit of consumers of legal services, and to create a new system of regulating 1,200 existing law firms.

The Legal Services (Scotland) Act 2010 provided the statutory basis for law firms to be owned by non-solicitors for the first time. The Law Society was authorised by the Scottish Government in 2021 to be an approved regulator of these new entities, called licensed legal services providers (LLSPs). While significant preparatory work has been done, the system for authorising and regulating the new businesses is not yet up and running and new legislation now makes further changes to the LLSP regulatory framework.

The Scottish Parliament passed the new Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Act in May 2025. The new legislation provides sweeping reforms to the way the existing solicitor profession is to be regulated. It also made changes to the make-up of LLSPs and how they are to be regulated.

The Law Society's Regulatory Committee, made up of solicitor and non-solicitor members, has therefore concluded that it would be appropriate to prioritise delivery of key parts of the new 2025 Act in the short term. This includes work on a whole new system of business level regulation of 1,200 existing law firms. The committee also agreed to focus on implementing the improvements to the complaints system, recognising that this had been a matter of particular focus for MSPs who had highlighted how the existing system was too slow for consumers in resolving disputes and issues of misconduct.

The committee therefore agreed to defer further work on LLSPs for the next two years. Noting that only limited interest had been expressed so far by firms in terms of becoming LLSPs, the committee agreed to return to the issue in 2027.

You can read more about the history of the bill here:

<https://www.lawscot.org.uk/research-and-policy/legal-services-review/>

- **Appointment of Ben Kemp as our new CEO**

General Counsel, Executive Director and dual-qualified solicitor Ben Kemp has been appointed to become the new Chief Executive Officer of the Law Society of Scotland.

Mr Kemp will join the Law Society in August from the professional body which represents and regulates actuaries, the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries (IFoA), where he has worked primarily as General Counsel and Executive Director, with a recent 15-month tenure as interim CEO.

A University of Edinburgh LLB graduate, Mr Kemp qualified as a Scottish solicitor in 2001 and has worked in private practice in both Scotland and London, before moving in-house to the IFoA in 2012.

You can find out more here:

<https://www.lawscot.org.uk/news-and-events/law-society-news/ben-kemp-takes-up-post-as-law-society-chief-executive/>

- **The Law Society of Scotland has developed the “Guide to Generative AI”**

A new guide has been launched to help Scottish solicitors navigate the growing range of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) products while avoiding potential risks posed to their businesses and clients.

The Law Society of Scotland has developed the “Guide to Generative AI” in association with AI legal platform Wordsmith.

Experts from the Law Society’s Technology Law and Practice Committee have contributed to the guide to provide information on questions such as:

- How reliable is work produced using AI in terms of accuracy and quality?
- How can client confidentiality and firm security be protected when using AI?
- Is client consent required before a firm uses AI?
- Should firm insurance cover be reviewed if using AI?
- You can read the guide here:

<https://www.lawscot.org.uk/members/business-support/lawscottech/resources/guide-to-generative-ai/>

- **The Law Society of Scotland is to establish a new committee to oversee its international work.**

The committee will advise on international activities, including the Society’s relations with EU institutions and other bars and law societies around the globe, as well as raising awareness about the increasing importance of international work to the Scottish legal profession.

In addition to guiding the development and implementation of a new international strategy, the committee will also support the Society’s work in relation to trade policy, including responding to consultations, and provide expertise on reflecting the interests of the membership to UK trade negotiators and their teams.

The new committee will also provide guidance for the Society on intervening on international human rights matters or issues related to upholding the rule of law.

You can read more here:

<https://www.lawscot.org.uk/news-and-events/law-society-news/law-society-creates-international-committee/>