

Standing 5
Committee on 1
Member 0
Services 2



The Standing Committee on Member Services formulates and oversees the implementation of strategies and programmes that enhance members' benefits and interests. It is the Standing Committee's mission to provide the best benefit for our members and to unite them with a common goal of developing the legal markets locally and internationally. The Standing Committee also makes recommendations to other Standing Committees on issues pertaining to members' legal practice. The Standing Committee met 11 times in 2015.

Members' Forum and Dinner Gathering

The Standing Committee organised one large scale Members' Forum and Dinner Gathering on 30 July. More than 90 members made submissions on the topic "*Litigation Funding*". The Standing Committee had invited the Standing Committee on Practitioners Affairs to review the suggestions and put them into action where practicable.

At the '*Dialogue with the President: What Can We Do for You?*' session, members raised questions on the floor and the President, together with Vice-Presidents and other Council members, gave answers on the spot.

"Law Society-Lexis" Online Research Platform

During the year, the Standing Committee liaised with LexisNexis for renewal of the Collaboration Agreement in the provision of the offsite research services "*Law Society-Lexis*" to members after the expiry of the 5-year term in December. The parties subsequently renewed the agreement for a second term.

Law Library

The Standing Committee worked to gradually transform the Law Library into an online one. Major online research platforms are now available in the Library for members' research purpose.

Disability Income Insurance

The Standing Committee considered the recommendation of the Member Benefit Committee for a top-up Personal Accident Insurance to supplement the existing Disability Income Insurance this year.

Other Practice Issues

The Standing Committee also made recommendations to the Council on topics which were relevant to members' practice.

Mandatory Practice Management Course (in consultation with Practice Management Committee)

The Standing Committee worked with Practice Management Committee for the implementation of a new Mandatory Practice Management Course pursuant to the amendment of Section 6(6B) of the *Legal Practitioners Ordinance* (“LPO”) requiring solicitors who intend to apply for an unconditional practising certificate to satisfy Council, in addition to compliance with the two-year employment requirement, that they have successfully completed such course. A set of guidelines exempting certain applicants from the requirement will be in place.

Application for Waiver under Rule 7 of the Solicitors (Professional Indemnity) Rules

The Standing Committee oversaw the development of a set of Guidelines for applications for exemption from the requirement to maintain professional indemnity under the said Rule 7 of the solicitors (Professional Indemnity) Rules in relation to pro bono legal services, and reviewed the position of solicitors in different practices offering such services against relevant rules and regulations relating to practice, professional conduct and indemnity on such pro bono work.

Assisting Members in Their Practice

The Standing Committee considered how to assist members generally in improving their knowledge in practice and more particularly in their drafting work, and revisited the idea of producing standard checklists and precedents. The Standing Committee also recommended the Council to subscribe relevant online practical solutions for members’ use in the Law Library.

CLUBHOUSE COMMITTEE

The Committee oversees the operations of the Clubhouse, make recommendations to strengthen the services of the Clubhouse and organise activities to enhance its widest use by members.

The Clubhouse is open for breakfast, lunch and evening functions (alcohol serving). It provides WIFI access and a selection of newspapers. The Clubhouse is an exclusive venue for Law Society offering not only a great place to unwind and relax, but also an ideal venue for meetings and social gatherings.

Jointly organised with the Member Benefit Committee, the Committee organised the first Clubhouse’s event in February entitled “*Pre-Valentine’s Day Mixer Event - Champagne Night*”. The event attracted 60 members and guests to experience the cozy environment of the Clubhouse.

To enhance quality services of the Clubhouse, the Committee introduced the cocktail reception menu with professional waiter service in May, which includes a wide selection

of food and beverage items, including French canapés, hot snacks, Japanese items, desserts and soft drinks.

Initiated by the Committee, a glass tasting and wine appreciation event was held in May to promote the Clubhouse as a good venue option for members' exclusive social gatherings.

The Law Society organised 65 events in the Clubhouse and general members used the venue for private functions on 28 occasions.

IN-HOUSE LAWYERS COMMITTEE

In-House Lawyers (“IHLs”) include members who are qualified lawyers not in private practice. The In-House Lawyers Committee (“IHLC”) works towards providing a forum for sharing of experiences and resources, exchanging of views and ideas in relation to the role of IHLs. It also creates a platform for facilitating the relationship between IHLs and private legal practitioners in Hong Kong. IHLC convened five meetings over the year.

Being the signature event of IHLC, the *2015 Annual Conference of In-House Lawyers* was held in September. The full-day event attracted over 400 members with a majority working in-house. 16 speakers and panelists were invited to speak on various topics tailored for IHLs including leadership, listing and delisting, brand protection, crisis management and employment law.

IHLC also organised various networking functions and events for IHLs. Three panel discussions under a series entitled “*In-House Counsel: Sweat & Glory*” featuring eminent legal professionals from both in-house and private practice were held this year. The panel discussions covered experience sharing on the following topics which were very well received:

- “*An Insight into Working in PRC as In-House Lawyers*” on 25 March
- “*Sleeping Through the Night: Managing the Increasing Exposure to Personal Liabilities of In-House Lawyers*” on 17 June
- “*Opportunities and Challenges: Reform of PRC Foreign Investment Law*” on 6 October

In November, speakers who participated in IHLC events during the year were invited to the “*Sweat and Glory 2015 Finale*”, a cocktail reception where members met and exchange views with these distinguished speakers in a relaxing atmosphere.

IHLC also organised a company visit to City of Dreams in Macau. The day trip consisted of a tour around the campus of the resort and a talk by City of Dreams' legal department on the legal practice in Macau. Participants had a good time exchanging ideas and experience across jurisdictions.

MEMBER BENEFIT COMMITTEE

The Committee works towards identifying services and benefits for Law Society members. The Committee's work ranges from improving personal well-being of The Law Society members to business promotion and development for the profession. The Committee also makes recommendations on promotion items received by The Law Society from time to time.

Luncheon Talks, Evening seminars and workshops

The Committee organised the following luncheon talks, evening seminars and workshops on a variety of topics:

- On 22 April, an evening talk on *“Landscape photography with medium format digital cameras”* was conducted by two members and award-winning photographers, Mr. Raymond Chak and Mr. Philip Tsang.
- A luncheon health talk on *“Trends of urban epidemics, dietary prevention and treatment of hyperglycemia, hyperlipidemia and hypertension”* by Ms. Elaine Hsieh, a Registered Dietician, was held on 7 July.
- A luncheon talk on *“Cheongsam Culture in Hong Kong”* was held on 29 October. Guest speaker Dr. Brenda Li shared with members the history of traditional Chinese costume – *“Cheongsam”* and *“Qipao”*.
- Two flower arrangement classes were held on 6 & 12 November respectively at Law Society's clubhouse.
- Jointly organised with Public Policy Committee, the first education seminar entitled *“Quality education – What is it all about?”* was held on 16 December. Speakers included Emeritus Professor Cheng Kai-ming and Mr. Lester Huang, Past President of The Law Society.

Member Benefit Committee x Live Band “TLF” Summer Party 8.28

The Committee jointly organised a live concert with Live Band “TLF” on 28 August. Over 180 participants from The Law Society and other professions attended the concert. Participants enjoyed the evening with great live music performed by TLF and guest bands, delicate canapés and drinks.

The Law Society's Annual Christmas Party 2015

The Committee organised the Annual Christmas Party with the theme “White Christmas” on 17 December. Over 250 members and guests attended the party. The party began with Christmas carols from kindergarten students followed by magic show, group games and performance by “TLF”.

Programmes for Members' Children

The Committee organised three guided visits for members' children, including a visit to

the Coca-Cola Hong Kong Plant in July and two visits to Calbee Four Seas Factory in August and September. Members and their children found the visits educational and interesting.

Insurance plans

In response to members' suggestions at previous Members' Forum and Dinner Gathering, the Committee sourced special discount offers on hospitalisation and outpatient insurance plans which provided comprehensive protection to members, trainee solicitors, registered foreign lawyers, associate members, student members, law firm staff, their spouses and dependents.

Besides, the Committee also renewed the Disability Income Insurance Plan. The insurance plan is taken out by The Law Society to provide income protection to members who cannot earn a living due to accident and/or sickness.

The Law Society's Credit Card

The Committee continued its collaboration with American Express on the "The Law Society American Express Platinum Card".

Other Benefits/Events offered by the Committee

Throughout the year, the Committee sourced and/or offered an exclusive range of products and services for the benefit of members, including free lai see packets, complimentary tickets to international art fairs and travel expo; special dining offers; special rate for hotel accommodation; discounts for legal publications, IT products, eye examination as well as fitness packages.

PRACTICE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Practice Management Committee is dedicated to serving members in best-practice endeavours. The scope of its work includes providing guidance to members on the opportunities and risks arising from the business of law practice, and on formulating strategies to expand law practice, manage risks in practice, enhance services to clients, motivate staff and manage finance and information. It aims to help law firms to achieve practice management excellence. It formulates guidelines and practice manuals and organises training programmes, seminars and conferences on practice management. The Committee met 3 times this year.

Mandatory Practice Management Course

Section 6(6B) of the *LPO* has been amended to include a requirement that solicitors who intend to apply for an unconditional practicing certificate must satisfy the Council, in addition to compliance with the two-year employment requirement, that they have successfully completed a practice management course provided or approved by The Law

Society (“the Mandatory Practice Management Course”).

The Committee had a busy year selecting the course provider, designing the topics, reviewing course materials and preparing guidelines in relation to the Mandatory Practice Management Course.

Helping Members to Manage and Grow their Businesses

This year, the Committee again invited a practice management consultant from overseas to present a seminar on “*How to Grow and Expand a Legal Practice, particularly from the Perspective of a Small and Medium Sized Firm*” on 12 November. Overwhelming responses from members were received.

The Committee also commissioned the writing of two articles entitled “*Staying Relevant in the Age of Technology*” and “*Keeping SME Firms Relevant in an Era of Globalisation*”. The first article was published in the December issue of the *Hong Kong Lawyer*. The second article will be published in 2016.

Alternative Business Structures

In light of the interest of members in alternative business structures, the Committee organised a seminar on Alternative Business Structure on 8 October. Due to the overwhelming response of members, the seminar was repeated on 14 October.

During the year, the Committee also considered the development of a precedents library for members’ reference.

ISLAMIC FINANCE WORKING PARTY

The Working Party provides recommendations on the legal development of Islamic financial products and services in Hong Kong. It aims to equip members with updated knowledge and insights in the rapidly growing Islamic Finance market in Hong Kong. It works closely with financial institutions, government, non-governmental organisations, international organisations and universities relating to Islamic finance. The Working Party also meets with lawyers from local firms and overseas lawyers to discuss developments in Islamic finance globally and the foundation that already exist in Hong Kong for Islamic finance, such as the issue of halal certificates and the launch of the second sukuk by Hong Kong government.

The Committee co-organised a Continuing Professional Development (“CPD”) course with Hong Kong Academy of Law Limited (“Academy”) and in March 2015, the Chairman of the Working Party delivered a course on: “*Islamic Finance, Legislative changes and Hong Kong Products and Services*”.

In June, the Chairman of the Working Party attended *the 6th Annual World Islamic Banking Conference: Asia Summit* in Singapore and promoted the development of Islamic

Finance in Hong Kong. The Chairman also participated as a panellist in the session entitled “*Islamic Finance Standard Setters: Enabling Continued Growth of Islamic Finance by Strengthening Regulatory Frameworks: New Technical Insights*”.

In October, the Working Party held its third annual networking reception with 58 distinguished guests from various consulates, government bodies, financial institutions and corporates.

Towards the end of the month, the Chairman of the Working Party attended the Red Money Conference in Hong Kong: “*Islamic Finance: Opportunities for Hong Kong and China*” and delivered a talk on “*Shariah Considerations in Sukuk and Other Islamic Transactions*”.

WORKING PARTY FOR SME FIRMS

The Working Party was established under the Practice Management Committee to make recommendations to the Committee on any support and guidance which the Working Party may consider desirable for Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (“SME”) law firm practice management; to provide a forum for networking, sharing of experience, exchange of views and discussion of common problems of sole practitioners and small partnership firms on practice management; and to provide a channel of communications between such firms and The Law Society.

The Working Party was working on a Manual which would comprise of information relevant to various applications made to The Law Society under the *LPO*, its subsidiary legislation and The Law Society’s Practice Directions for (a) registration by solicitors; (b) registrations as (i) trainee solicitor, (ii) foreign lawyer and (iii) foreign law firm; and (c) consent and waiver.

During the year, the Working Party considered the feasibility of engaging locums to assist law firms and relevant issues involved. The Working Party also considered the problems faced by sole principals and partners of law firms during their period of absence, and how assistance could be offered.

The Working Party was looking into online practice solutions to suit the needs of SME law firms.

YOUNG PARTNERS ROUNDTABLE (“YPR”)

YPR was established in 2013 to serve the needs and interests of members who have been admitted to partnership or have set up their own practice for five years or less (“young partners”). Its mission is to facilitate the career development and enhance the business network of young partners; and promote their knowledge of law, managerial skills, leadership ability and practice by offering diversified services and activities to young partners and providing support to them.

In September, the YPR visited LinkedIn’s Hong Kong office which was established in

2012. A guided tour was conducted by Mr. Nate Taylor, Regional Sales Leader, Hong Kong & Taiwan. Members had the chance to know more about LinkedIn’s services, how it could help law firms to build their business networks, the significance of market exposure and social media trends.

PRO BONO COMMITTEE

The Committee reviews the types of pro bono work undertaken by the profession, promotes public awareness of members’ pro bono services and encourages participation by the profession in pro bono work.

During the year, the Committee reviewed various pro bono schemes in which The Law Society has organised and/or coordinated participation by its members. They included the Free Legal Helpline, Free 45 minutes Legal Consultation, Free Legal Advice on Building Management, Duty Lawyer Services, and various programmes for social enterprises, non-governmental organisations (“NGOs”) and secondary students.

Free Legal Helpline

The Helpline was established in late August 2013 offering pro bono legal advice to the public in need of professional legal services on three areas of law, namely personal injury, matrimonial law and criminal law.

The Pilot Scheme on Mediation, which was launched in December 2014 under the Helpline to provide free telephone session on mediation, has been extended until 31 December 2016.

Up to the end of December 2015, about 3,500 calls had been handled through the Helpline.

Figure 1 : Number of cases received in 2015

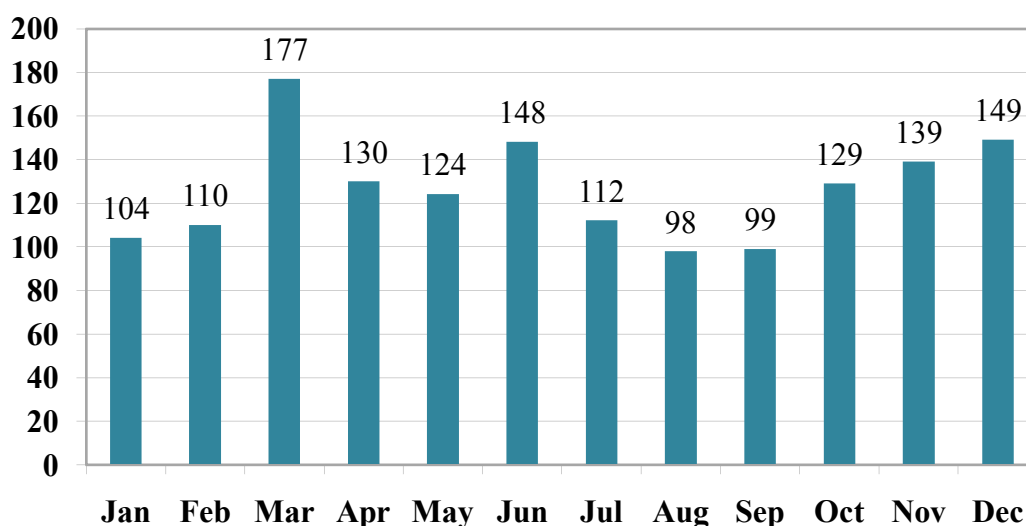
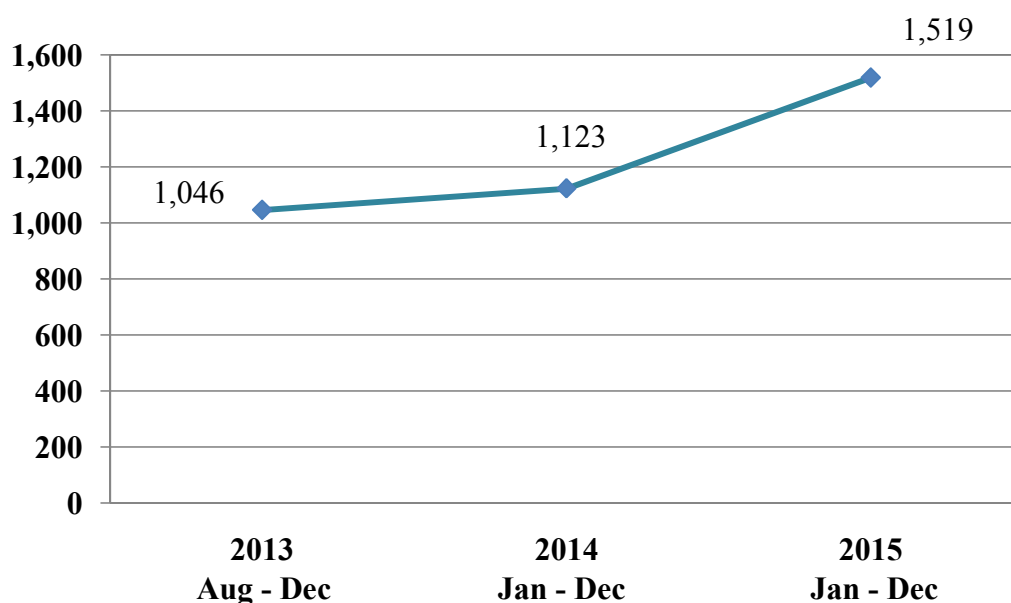


Figure 2 : Number of cases received 2013 - 2015



Collaboration with Hong Kong Council of Social Service (“HKCSS”)

The Law Society partnered with HKCSS on their “NGOs Governance Platform Project” to promote best practice and experience sharing about NGO governance among board members of their NGO members. A briefing session was held in May to enlist members from The Law Society to participate in the project.

In July, the Committee joined a HKCSS Visitation Programme to meet with the Board of Directors of the Boys’ and Girls’ Club Association of Hong Kong to share legal knowledge and promote good governance.

Collaboration with Education Bureau

The Committee continued its collaboration with the Education Bureau in its “Business-School Partnership Programme” (“BSPP”) with the aim of promoting better co-operation and closer alliances between the legal sector and schools, to lead students out of the classroom to gain a wider perspective of the world and to get them better prepared for life in the society.

Initiated by the Committee, a visit to High Court followed by an introductory seminar on mediation was held in May as the debut BSPP event. The programme was oversubscribed. Due to venue limitation, only 7 out of 35 secondary schools which indicated interest could be accommodated. Form 4 and 5 students who participated in the programme had the chance to experience real court hearings, learn from two solicitors on the path to become a lawyer, and grasped basic concepts of mediation.

Free Column on Volunteering and Business in Hong Kong Economic Journal

As a participating member of Hong Kong Council of Volunteering, the Committee was invited to contribute articles to the free column “談商言義” on volunteering and business in Hong Kong Economic Journal. The latest article “律師心繫社群 公益義不容辭” was published in September.

WORKING GROUP ON INSURANCE FOR PRO BONO WORK

The Working Group reviews the regulatory framework relating to professional indemnity and insurance arrangement and coverage to ensure that members are sufficiently covered when they carry out pro bono services.

This year, the Working Group followed up with the progress of their report to the Council in 2014 making recommendations on an insurance scheme which covers members in carrying out pro bono services in NGOs to be registered with The Law Society, and reviewed the Council’s recommendations on the proposed scheme and related issues.

WORKING GROUP ON PRO BONO PROJECTS ON BUILDING MANAGEMENT WORK

The Working Group oversees the pro bono projects in relation to building management. It updates members of the new developments and legislations in the building management spectrum from time to time.

In early 2015, the Working Group worked in collaboration with Home Affairs Department (“HAD”) to take over the Free Legal Advice Service on Building Management from the Housing Society.

During the year, HAD invited speakers from The Law Society to take part in their workshops on building management, with a view to equip building owners and representatives of owners’ corporations with concise knowledge of the *Building Management Ordinance*. The Working Group members attended three workshops in Kowloon West District, New Territories West District and Wong Tai Sin District respectively in September and October.

WORKING GROUP ON PRO BONO WEBPAGE

The Working Group continued to work on the Pro Bono webpage in the members’ zone of The Law Society website to encourage participation by members in pro bono work and promote public awareness.

WORKING GROUP ON SEMINARS FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

The “*Social Enterprise Legal Seminar Series*”, a collaboration project between The Law Society and HKCSS to help social enterprises understand the legal aspects of their operation, had been running for the fourth consecutive year.

In 2015, the Working Group organised one workshop which dealt with the major changes brought about by the *New Companies Ordinance* and their implications to social enterprises. The workshop attracted 74 representatives of social enterprises.

PRO BONO AND COMMUNITY WORK RECOGNITION COMMITTEE

The Committee promotes and encourages active participation of individual members and law firms in pro bono and community work by showing appreciation for and recognition of their outstanding commitment to volunteering at the Award Ceremony.

Since its inception in 2011, the Pro Bono and Community Work Recognition Programme has established itself as one of the annual signature events of The Law Society. The key objectives of the Programme are to promote public awareness of the pro bono work offered by our members, trainee solicitors and registered foreign lawyers, and to recognise their pro bono efforts and contributions to the society. The Programme continued to gain recognition among the legal profession. More than 130 Law Society members and law firms registered for the 2015 Programme.

Graced with the presence of the Hon. Chief Justice Geoffrey Ma and the Solicitor General Wesley Wong Wai-chung, the Award Ceremony of the Programme 2015 was held on 4 December at the High Court. A total of 14 law firms and 99 members received awards including the Distinguished Pro Bono Service Award and the Distinguished Pro Bono Law Firm Award, the Individual Award and the Law Firm Award.

The awardees of Distinguished Awards were selected by a judging panel comprising Ms. Florence Hui Hiu-fai, Under Secretary for Home Affairs; Mr. JP Lee, Chairman of Agency for Volunteer Service; Mr. Wong Yan-lung, Former Secretary for Justice; Mr. Anthony Chow Wing-kin, Past President of The Law Society; and Ms. Melissa Pang, Vice-President and Chairlady of the Pro Bono and Community Work Recognition Committee of The Law Society.

To commemorate the sixth anniversary of the Award Ceremony, a booklet was specially designed and produced to promote The Law Society’s pro bono and community services together with the profile / list of awardees or awarded law firms since its launch in 2010. In order to facilitate public understanding of The Law Society’s pro bono legal work and

community services, over 2,000 booklets will be distributed at centres operated by NGOs, government bureaux/departments as well as public hospitals and made available to the public free of charge in 2016.

RECREATION AND SPORTS COMMITTEE

The Recreation and Sports Committee (“RSC”) aims to serve members by providing a whole range of recreational and sporting activities, and promoting work-life balance and fostering friendships among members.

In 2015, RSC organised six regular meetings and captains and convenors of various teams met bi-monthly to report on their activities.

Around 600 members joined the Recreation and Sports Programme 2015 and participated in a variety of regular practice sessions for badminton, basketball, cycling, distance running, dragon boat, football, golf, hiking, snooker, swimming, table tennis, tennis, tenpin bowling, volleyball, bridge, Chinese calligraphy and painting, cookery, food and wine appreciation, dancing, live band, singing, Taichi and yoga.

2015 marked the 10th anniversary of RSC and a number of important events were held during this year.

In November, Hong Kong hosted the *6th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Lawyers Sports Meet* (“Sports Meet”), the second time since 2009. Over 400 lawyer-athletes from the three jurisdictions gathered in Hong Kong and competed in 11 sports events. Taipei was also invited as guest team to take part in some of the games. The Hong Kong team eventually came first in seven competitions and claimed the Champion title in this biannual event.

The Rule of Law Marathon was held for the first time in the Sports Meet to promote the spirit of justice and sportsmanship. Representatives from the three jurisdictions took part in a relay across the regions to pass the Rule of Law Flag, with amputee runners taking part in the Hong Kong leg. The Flag was eventually handed over to our Little Legal Ambassadors signifying the inheritance of the Rule of Law.

The 10th Recreation and Sports Night (“Sports Night”) was another highlight event. “The Law Carnival” was attended by over 600 participants, including fellow lawyers from Guangdong, Macau and Taipei. A video of the past Sports Nights was played during the event reminding members of their precious memories. A charity element by means of a silent auction of Chinese calligraphy artworks of members was introduced to promote inclusive society.

An anniversary booklet commemorating this important milestone of the Committee was also published.

Amongst many more activities held this year, some major events included the *Family Fun*

Day, Legal Professional Cup Dragon Boat Race, Annual Swimming Gala, and Cooking and Tasting Competition. These activities together with the recreational and sporting classes organised this year attracted attendance by over 1,000 members.

Recreation and Sports Club for Hong Kong Professional Bodies

The Law Society is a member of the Recreation and Sports Club for Hong Kong Professional Bodies (“RSCP”) and takes part in inter-professional sports and recreational tournaments regularly held by RSCP. RSCP forms a networking platform enabling members to bond with members of other major professional bodies in Hong Kong.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

The Technology Committee provides technology knowhow and services to members. It met six times.

The Committee co-organised a number of seminars with the Academy during the year, all were well received:

- *BYOD Series: "Managing Data Risk in Using your Mobile Device; Be More Productive and Effective with Use of The Law Society App"* on 27 April
- *The Electronic Services of the Companies Registry and the New Companies Ordinance* on 8 September
- *"Smart Contract"* on 19 October
- *BYOD Series: "Smart Phones and Smart Apps for Smart Solicitors"* on 28 October

This year, “The Law Society’s App” was upgraded to include new features including running text and keyword search functions. Over 5,200 members have downloaded the App to communicate with The Law Society and/or sign up for Law Society events.

Meeting with Hong Kong Monetary Authority on Bitcoin

In response to the MyCoin saga, the Committee initiated a meeting with Hong Kong Monetary Authority in March concerning regulation of Bitcoins. The parties also exchanged views on issues relating to third party payment service providers.

Consultation on Various Policy Issues Relating to the Implementation of Information Technology Strategy Plan of the Judiciary (“ITSP”)

The Judiciary conducted its third round of consultation on ITSP and consulted The Law Society on the use of technology through introduction of new services/facilities including use of electronic documents/bundles for court services, introduction of WIFI facilities, presenting and/or taking evidence with the aid of audio-visual equipment during court proceedings, and proposed self-registration system of recording the attendance of parties/legal representatives.

The Committee, jointly with the Criminal Law & Procedure Committee and Civil Litigation Committee, attended one meeting with the Judiciary and delivered a submission in March.

Law Firm Support Services System

The Committee submitted an application for government funding for the development of a (integrated) system with features including solicitor-client billing; document management; office administration; law firm accounting and compliance under the *LPO* and relevant Rules for adoption by law firms. The Committee awaits the result of the funding application.

3rd Annual International Cybercrime and Computer Forensic Conference

In June, members of the Committee attended the Conference in Macau and exchanged views with other participants on cybercrime and cyber security, privacy, identity theft and associated trends.

Others

The Committee recommended the Guidance Committee to issue guidelines on issuing interim bills and allowing the issuance of electronic bills and receipts via e-signature.

The Committee also made recommendations to the Working Party on Virtual Office.

In December, the Committee sponsored a game during The Law Society's Annual Christmas Party to showcase the functions of The Law Society's App and in particular the Survey function.

WORKING GROUP ON LAW SOCIETY'S APP

Having proposed and led the creation, updating and upgrading of The Law Society's App on iOS and Android platforms, the Working Group is tasked to serve members through maintaining and promoting widespread adoption of The Law Society's mobile App amongst members, and review/add features and functionality to the App under the auspices of the Technology Committee.

In 2015, three functional features of the mobile App have been enhanced:-

- the running text function on the home page;
- keyword search functions in the *Law List*; and
- keyword search functions in *The Hong Kong Solicitors' Guide to Professional Conduct*.

To encourage for more frequent use of the mobile App, the Working Group initiated two BYOD seminars, one in April 2015 entitled "*Managing Data Risk in Using your Mobile Device. Be More Productive and Effective with Use of The Law Society App*" to introduce various exciting App features and functionalities to members, followed by "*Smart Phones*

and Smart Apps for Smart Lawyers" in the second half of the year.

At the Law Society's Annual Christmas Party held on 17 December, an interactive competition session called "*Rhapsody of Christmas*" was conducted with the use of the Survey function of The Law Society's App. Members were invited to guess the total number of chocolates in a decorated Christmas lodge. The first member who input the closest number was the winner of the grand prize.

The Law Society's App is one of the first of its kind introduced by law societies around the world. Since the release of mobile App in 2013, it has cumulated 5,287 downloads on iPhones and Android devices. In 2015, there were 676 new activations and the "hit rate" of instances of members clicking within the App reached 217,714.

LAW FIRM TECHNICAL SUPPORT INTEREST GROUP

The Committee formed a Law Firm Technical Support Interest Group for members, trainee members and law firm technical support staff. Its main function is to provide a forum for sharing of experience and resources and exchange of views relating to technological issues in legal practice.

A Taskforce was formed to draft the "IT Security Guidelines for Law Firms".

YOUNG SOLICITORS' GROUP ("YSG")

YSG was established to serve the needs and interests of members with less than five years' post-qualification experience and trainee solicitors. Its mission is to facilitate and assist the career and personal developments of its members by offering diversified services and activities that are of interest and benefit to its members. In addition, YSG also serves as an interactive platform for our junior and senior members, as well as students of the local law schools and members of the profession.

Friday Lunch Gathering

Friday Lunch Gathering has been a regular event where newly qualified solicitors and trainee solicitors are invited to meet with The Law Society Council Members, Members of the Standing Committee on Member Services and YSG Committee Members.

Welcome Drinks for Trainee Solicitors

To welcome trainee solicitors to The Law Society, a Welcome Drinks was held on 27 November when more than 90 young, passionate and energetic trainee solicitors gathered at The Law Society Clubhouse. At the event, President Stephen Hung welcomed the trainee solicitors to the profession and explained the work of The Law Society. He also offered valuable advice and insight on how to prepare oneself and make full use of the traineeship period before becoming a full-fledged solicitor. Council Member Nick Chan

and YSG Chairlady Serina Chan introduced to the trainee solicitors various initiatives and activities of YSG, and various Law Society committees.

Communication with Law Students

Law students of the three law schools in Hong Kong were invited to meet the Council Members, members of various committees of The Law Society as well as general members in an informal networking event on 18 September. Around 180 law students and practitioners attended the event. The law students actively engaged in dialogue with President Stephen Hung and various practitioners who shared with them their insights on the development of legal practice in Hong Kong, as well as soft skills which were useful to their practice.

CONNECTED Mentorship and Buddy Programme

“CONNECTED”, a mentorship and buddy scheme for trainee solicitors, has become a flagship event organised by YSG with overwhelming participation of trainee solicitors. The purpose of the scheme is to provide an opportunity for trainee solicitors to meet both the younger members (their “buddy”) and the senior members (their “mentor”) of The Law Society and establish a “mentorship to life-long-friendship relationship” through participating and interacting in a series of team-building activities:

- Kick-off Event on 21 March
- “Wanchai Heritage Tour x Smartphone Photography Workshop” on 27 July
- “Sake Tasting night x Barbecue x Moon Appreciation” on 19 September
- Closing Event: “Glass Farm’s Terrarium Workshop” on 6 December
- Social gatherings organised by mentors and buddies

Distinguished Speakers’ Luncheon

Two YSG’s Distinguished Speakers’ Luncheons were held on 13 June and 12 September respectively. Professor Johannes Chan, SC and the Hon. Mr. Tong Ka-wah, SC were invited to share with young members their career and personal experiences during the luncheons. Both Professor Chan and the Hon. Mr. Tong’s sharing were highly enlightening and insightful.

IHLC x YSG: “Current Challenges for In-House Counsel – Advising the Board, the Management and Corporate Governance”

The third IHLC x YSG forum, entitled “*Current Challenges for In-House Counsel – Advising the Board, the Management and Corporate Governance*” jointly organised by the IHLC and YSG was successfully held on 28 April. YSG was honoured to have Ms. Jasmine Karimi, former Director and Associate General Counsel of Coach Inc.; Ms. Anne Salt, Group Head of Legal and Human Resources of Rochdale Spears Group and Mr. Joe Zhou, Executive Director and Head of Legal of China International Capital Corporation (Hong Kong) Limited as guest speakers. The forum was concluded with a drinks reception.

Professional & Personal Development Series: Air Pollution Control – Hong Kong, Zhuhai Bridge and Beyond

On 9 May, YSG jointly organised a programme known as “Air Pollution Control – Hong Kong, Zhuhai Bridge and Beyond” with the Environment Bureau. The participants took part in an informative guided visit to the Central Air Quality Monitoring Station led by Dr. Christine Loh, Under Secretary for the Environment and Mr. Eric Ho, Senior Environment Protection Officer. It was then followed by a seminar on environmental policies and law in Hong Kong. Dr. Brian Baillie, Partner of Messrs. Fred Kan & Co., joined Dr. Loh in introducing key environmental protection policies in Hong Kong and various air quality guidelines from the World Health Organization. Dr. Baillie also shared a number of environmental and public health cases with the participants.

Cross Strait Four Regions Young Lawyers Forum 2015

The Greater China Legal Affairs Committee and YSG co-organised the *Cross Strait Four Regions Young Lawyers Forum 2015* under the topic “*Belt and Road: Unlimited Opportunity for the Cross Strait Four Regions Young Lawyers*” on 23 October. Reputable speakers including Mr. Stephen Wong, Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data and Mr. Nicholas Kwan, Director of Research of Hong Kong Trade Development Council talked about the legal and economic implications of the Belt and Road policies. The forum also provided professional exchanges and networking opportunities for young lawyers from the Mainland, Taiwan, Macau and Hong Kong.

Joint Professional Activities

To foster closer relationship with other young professionals, YSG jointly organised a series of events with the young groups of other professional bodies, including the Hong Kong Bar Association, Hong Kong Dental Association, Hong Kong Institute of Architects, Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Hong Kong Institute of Chartered Secretaries, Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects, Hong Kong Institute of Planners, Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors and Hong Kong Medical Association.

Joint professional activities organised in 2015 included:

- “*Meet the Professionals*” Networking Party on 17 April
- “*Joint Professional Art Appreciation Cocktail and Traditional Chinese Theatre Performance*” on 9 May
- “*Joint Professional Happy Hour*” on 28 August
- “*Joint Professional Nam Sang Wai Tour and Networking Drinks*” on 12 December

On 4 July, YSG, as a member body of The Young Coalition Professional Group (“YCPG”), co-organised the Third Youth Forum at the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine. The title of the 2015 Forum was “*Succession to Success: Developing Next Generation Leaders*”, and discussions were held on intergenerational issues relating to professional and business development in Hong Kong. The 2015 Forum began with a dialogue among the Hon. C.Y. Leung, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“HKSAR”),

representatives of the YCPG and audience members. There were also two panel sessions, one for the planning and development sectors, and another for the finance, health care and legal sectors. The Hon. Laura Cha, Chair of the Financial Services Development Council, and the Hon. Anna Wu, Non-Official Member of the Executive Council of HKSAR, shared insights from their legal careers and their experiences in public offices. Ms. Serina Chan, Chair of the YSG, acted as a co-moderator of this session.

YSG also co-organised “*One Day Seminar on Contract Management*” on 25 April with the young members group of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (East Asia Branch), the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (Hong Kong Branch), the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors and the Institute of Civil Engineers Hong Kong Association.

Community & Pro Bono Services

Encouraging and instilling in young members the idea of “service to others” has always been at the heart of YSG. In 2015, YSG jointly organised a series of story-telling sessions with the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals with the aim of broadening under-resourced children’s horizons through various activities led by volunteers, and to strengthen their interest and confidence in using English in their daily life. The theme of the summer program was “Law and Justice: Understanding Respect and Equality” which introduced the importance of abiding by the law to the children.

On 21 November, YSG as a member body of the YCPG, together with the Education Bureau, co-organised the Joint Professional Career Day. The Programme targeted students from secondary schools with lesser resources. Over 50 professionals from 11 member institutes of YCPG conducted 20 career talks and sharing sessions, and benefited around 300 secondary school students from nearly 30 secondary schools in Hong Kong.

INTEREST GROUP ON MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS

The Group was formed with the primary aims of setting up a platform for sharing information on mergers and acquisitions; to have in place an effective mechanism to collate relevant information on the needs of potential investors from the Mainland and understanding their investment objectives; formulating how Hong Kong solicitors can assist in the process in advising Mainland enterprises in relation to their diversification of investments abroad pursuant to the national "going out" policy; and inviting those with the relevant expertise to express their interest to be involved.

LAW SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS WORKING PARTY

The Working Party is tasked to plan, coordinate and determine the coverage, format, layout and title of the publications. To introduce the profession of solicitors and The Law Society to the general public, the Working Party had also reviewed the contributions of selected law school students during the reporting year. In view of other publications

providing similar information being available in the market, the Working Party had decided to consider other topics which could arouse interest from members of The Law Society and the general public. The Working Party will continue to explore interesting topics and to follow closely all important legal developments for publication in 2016.

WORKING PARTY ON HISTORICAL ARCHIVE

The Working Party is tasked to recommend a policy for the establishment and maintenance of an archive for The Law Society so that materials and information with historical value can be preserved and made accessible. The Working Party will continue to facilitate and render appropriate assistance to the establishment and maintenance of the archive; and monitor the implementation and compliance of such policy as approved by The Law Society after the archive has been established.

WORKING GROUP ON LAW LIBRARY

The Working Party on Law Library was set up to reorganise the existing law library collection and facilities with an aim to better serve our members.

WORKING GROUP ON MEMBER WELLNESS PROGRAMME

The Working Group was set up to promote overall wellness of members through creating and implementing short-term and long-term wellness programmes and activities. The Working Group works to identify the needs, interest and concerns of members relating to the management of stress, mental and emotional issues, and sets up services and/or provide other resources for appropriate management of such issues. Various activities and events were held by the Working Group during the year.

Mental health problem has become one of the most common health problems in recent years. The Working Group arranged a 12-hour Mental Health First Aid Training course in March.

As cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke, is becoming more common in Hong Kong, the Working Group organised a luncheon talk on “*Take the road to a healthy heart*” on 31 March which aimed to let members understand more about cardiovascular disease as well as prevention and control of high blood pressure, high blood glucose, high cholesterol.

To increase positivity ratio and de-stress, a luncheon workshop on “*Laughter Yoga for Workplace Vitality & Productivity*” was held on 30 October. Members learnt simple stretches and breathing which could help to unblock used up energy and re-energise

through laughing.

To increase members' awareness on cholesterol and trans fat, the Working Group organised a luncheon seminar "*Defending Cholesterol, Say NO to Trans fat!*" on 30 November.

The Working Group organised a luncheon seminar on "*Holidays, Physical Health and Mental Well Being*" on 7 December to highlight the inter-relations between "holiday" and "mental well being".

WORKING GROUP ON ONLINE RECRUITMENT SERVICES

The Working Group was established by end of 2013 to consider providing an online recruitment platform for law firm employers and member employees. The Working Group has explored the different approaches in offering that service and the issues involved. A request for proposal will be issued early next year.

WORKING GROUP ON STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

The Working Group was formed to provide recommendations to the Standing Committee on matters regarding student membership of The Law Society, including but not limited to recruitment of student members, enhancement of their benefits, and coordination of different committees on provision of better services to student members.

The Working Group put up more efforts this year to recruit student members from the Law Schools through distributing the membership application forms in the Orientation camps as well as in The Law Society's gathering with law students. A total of 358 new student membership applications were received in 2015.