

**156th ANNUAL REPORT- 1 DECEMBER 2018 TO 30 NOVEMBER 2019**

This is the 156<sup>th</sup> Report of the Solicitors' Benevolent Association, which was established in 1863. It is a voluntary charitable body, consisting of all members of the profession in Ireland. It assists members or former members of the Solicitors' Profession in Ireland and their wives, husbands, widows, widowers, family and immediate dependants who are in need and is active in giving assistance on a confidential basis throughout the 32 counties.

The amount paid out during the year in grants was €756,168 which was collected from members' subscriptions, donations, legacies and investment income. Currently there are 83 beneficiaries in receipt of regular grants and approximately one half of these are themselves supporting spouses and children.

There are 21 directors, 3 of whom reside in Northern Ireland, and they meet monthly in the Law Society's offices, Blackhall Place. They meet at The Law Society, Belfast, every other year. The work of the directors, who provide their services entirely on a voluntary basis, consists in the main of reviewing applications for grants and approving new applications. The Directors also make themselves available to those who may need personal or professional advice.

The Directors are grateful to both Law Societies for their support and, in particular, wish to express thanks to Patrick Dorgan, Past President of the Law Society of Ireland, Suzanne Rice, Past President of the Law Society of Northern Ireland, Ken Murphy, Director General, David A. Lavery, Chief Executive and the personnel of both Societies. The Law Society again organised The Spring Gala which was held in October, for the benefit of our Association and a very sincere thanks to Patrick Dorgan, the members of the Council and to the organisers of the Gala.

The Directors and the beneficiaries of the Association send a very sincere thanks to Brian McMullin for organising The North/South IronLaw challenge which consisted of a 3.8k swim, 180k cycle, and a marathon, and to his colleagues from the North Adam Wood, Darren Toombs, Peter Jack and from the South Ivan Feran and Stuart Gilhooly who took part in the event. They succeeded in raising the sum of €31,226 for the Association.

I wish to express particular appreciation to all those who contributed to the Association when applying for their practising certificates, to those who made individual contributions and to the following: The Law Society of Ireland, Law Society of Northern Ireland, Dublin Solicitors' Bar Association, Courts Service, Faculty of Notaries Public in Ireland, Limavady Solicitors' Association, Local Authority Solicitors Bar Association, Mayo Solicitors Bar Association, Medico-Legal Society of Ireland, Midland Solicitors Bar Association, Sheriffs' Association, Southern Law Association, West Cork Bar Association.

The demands on our Association are rising due to the present economic difficulties and to cover the greater demands on the Association additional fund-raising events are necessary. Additional subscriptions are more than welcome as of course are legacies and the proceeds of any fundraising events. In certain cases the Association can claim tax relief for donations of €250 or more. I would encourage Bar Associations to run functions such as CPD courses to raise funds for the Association. Subscriptions and donations will be received by any of the Directors or by the Secretary, from whom all information may be obtained at 73 Park Avenue, Dublin 4. Information can also be obtained from the Association's website at [www.solicitorsbenevolentassociation.com](http://www.solicitorsbenevolentassociation.com). I would urge all members of the Association, when making their own wills, to leave a legacy to the Association. You will find the appropriate wording of a bequest at Page 34 of the Law Directory 2019.

I would like to thank all the Directors and the Association's Secretary Geraldine Pearse, for their valued hard work, dedication and assistance during the year.

**Thomas A Menton Chairman**