

# Council for Licensed Conveyancers

## Perceptions audit

April 2014



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## Introduction

### The context

As stated in the initial brief, it is often thought that the Council for Licensed Conveyancers (CLC) has ‘punched below its weight’ in the legal sector. This stems in part from a lack of commentary in the press, and a mixed track record in building relationships with peer organisations. Due to this low profile, policy makers have failed to give the CLC the attention it merits in reforming education and training, while productive dialogue with others in the legal community has been stunted.

### The audit

To enhance the CLC’s understanding of where and how it can improve its services, Spada was enlisted to undertake a dual-pronged perceptions audit. On the one hand the audit sought to gain the perspectives of important stakeholders in the legal community, elucidating how the CLC is perceived by its most important peers. On the other hand it sought to gain the views of the CLC’s own regulated community, learning where its internal strengths and weaknesses lie.

To gather the in-depth views of the CLC’s peers, Spada arranged and undertook 18 phone interviews with respondents chosen for their prominence in the legal community and their collaboration or interaction with the CLC. In instances where the CLC’s first choice of respondent at a particular body was unavailable, a suitable colleague was found to offer their perspectives.

In addition, an online survey was disseminated to a much larger group of people: those considered part of the CLC’s regulated community. The survey largely sought to gather quantitative data, encouraging respondents to rate elements of the CLC’s policies and organisation. Yet it also gave respondents the opportunity to express concerns or observations in greater detail on certain topics.

### The report

The report presents the results and main themes from each of the two audit strands, indicating where the two communities feel the CLC can improve the execution and presentation of its regulation, strategy and policies.

As one would expect, there are areas of distinct overlap – concurrent themes which are more comprehensively indicative of wider issues and weaknesses. These points are clearly outlined in the report’s executive summary immediately below.

The report concludes with a set of recommendations based on the major strands of feedback.

## Executive summary

The CLC is generally seen as an organised and professional body which is safe rather than exciting, organised rather than overly ambitious, and a little too incommunicative.

More specifically:

- A number of respondents reflected upon an improvement in the CLC's communication and organisation in the period since Sheila Kumar took over
- A large proportion of respondents asserted that the CLC is professional and competent in its conduct
- There is room for improvement in communication, with respondents suggesting there is insufficiently comprehensive contact between the CLC and:
  - the wider public
  - the press
  - its regulated community
  - its peers
- The CLC is struggling to raise awareness of the work that it has already done, and will continue to do, on lender panels
- The CLC's standards are generally perceived to be good, but some consider the CLC's standards to be less 'onerous' or 'tough' than the SRA's
- With changes in and to the legal sector afoot, respondents urge the CLC to consider its future by revisiting the intentions of its original blueprint and preparing for the legal landscape in which it may shortly find itself

### I. Communication

The most prominent theme across the perceptions audit was communication: how the CLC communicates with its own community; how it publicises its views; and how it engages with its peers.

#### Failing to improve public awareness

Respondents emphasised the relatively small size of the CLC and its difficulties in raising public awareness of its role in the legal sector.

#### Understanding and awareness of the CLC's themes and policies

The audit shows that the CLC has more consistently raised awareness of its key policies and views amongst stakeholders – with five of eight key opinions identified. However, there is clearly a lack of understanding amongst the regulated community, for whom issues need to be more fully clarified.

### **The CLC in the press**

Relatively few survey respondents were aware of the CLC's submission to the Ministry of Justice's review of legal services or of CLC commentary in the press.

Respondents from the press indicated that the CLC fails to issue sufficiently regular comment on important issues.

### **Communication with peers**

Some of the stakeholder respondents considered the current level of contact to be suitable, but the CLC generally fails to initiate contact with its peers. More regular contact would be welcome.

### **Distance learning and the manual**

A number of students referred to difficulties in learning remotely and the further problems – such as taking exams – this incurred. Some also criticised the manual's content and its ease of use.

### **Website and newsletter criticism**

The website and newsletter were both considered 'fine', but a considerable number of survey respondents viewed the breadth of issues and topics covered as 'poor'.

## **2. Lender panels**

On the whole there seems a significant discrepancy between the amount of work that the CLC is doing on lender panels and how its work is perceived.

### **Activity on improving the situation with lender panels**

Several of the phone respondents reflected positively on the CLC's work with lender panels, indicating that it has recently raised its profile with lenders, that lenders 'broadly trust' the CLC, and that the CLC has been more proactive with lenders since the arrival of Sheila Kumar as chief executive.

### **Perception of its work on lender panels**

On the other hand, some phone respondents suggested that the CLC needs to meet lender panels face-to-face more regularly, and that more work could be done with lenders and panels. Harsher criticism came from amongst the regulated community: more respondents viewed the CLC's campaign for a review of how banks manage lender panels as 'average' or worse than 'good' or better, alongside suggestions that sole practitioners and smaller firms are frustrated by this issue.

### **3. Standards**

Respondents compare the CLC relatively favourably with other bodies in the legal sector. Large numbers of the regulated community will renew their licences.

#### **Comparison**

Those in the regulated community who have experienced regulation from another body largely see the CLC as commensurately effective, while stakeholders generally consider the CLC as a professional and organised body considering its size and the size of its regulated community.

It is worth noting that some respondents from the stakeholder audit suggested that CLC standards and their enforcement are possibly weaker than with other regulators. This observation, however, manifested itself in different tones: some felt that CLC standards were indeed lower and needed to be tougher, whereas others observed – positively – that the CLC was a ‘light touch’ regulator.

#### **Renewal**

While the online survey did indicate concerns for some elements of CLC regulation and communication, the considerable majority of the regulated community are happy to be regulated by the CLC and consider it value for money.

### **4. Looking ahead**

From the feedback there are specific things upon which the CLC should focus. These include but are not confined to: enabling conveyancers to switch marketplace and bring their panel status with them; improving public awareness of its existence, importance and capability; and thinking about where it might sit in a changing legal landscape.

More generally it seems clear that the CLC must:

- Keep on improving at the same rate
- Keep on improving communication with the regulated community, peers, the press, and the public
- Concentrate on what makes it important
- Think strategically about where it needs to go to stay, and become more, relevant

Phone interviews



## Summary of the phone interviews

- Respondents have seen a significant improvement in communication and organisation since Sheila Kumar took over as chief executive
- The foremost area for improvement is communication. The CLC fails to initiate contact or meetings with peers, which hampers relations and prevents the faster resolution of problems
- In the section testing awareness of the CLC's views on key developments in conveyancing, respondents were able to spot positive statements about the CLC's views on certain issues; they struggled, by contrast, to identify where deliberate misrepresentations had been made. This implies that where the CLC does seek to publicise its views, it can be effective – but the overall message is that the CLC does not do this enough
- There is a challenge to improve public awareness of the CLC's existence and role: as such, the CLC should also look to communicate its views on important industry issues more clearly, more widely, and more rapidly
- CLC standards are viewed by the majority to be high, though some others believe its regulation to be not as well enforced as, or less 'onerous' in comparison to, the SRA
- On functions and responsibilities there could be more attention paid to illustrating whether the CLC provides education and training for the profession; whether it has representative responsibilities; and who or which firms can or cannot be regulated by the CLC
- Among further areas for possible improvement, the CLC could consider: supporting members and current non-members to switch marketplace and bring panel status with them; and thinking about its role and relevance in a marketplace altered by impending industry reforms

These points are explored in further detail through the following sections, and then examined in the concluding points.

## Conducting the phone discussions

The perceptions audit of relevant stakeholders in the legal community was conducted during the months of January and February 2014. Spada interviewed 18 respondents selected by the CLC as important stakeholders in the legal community. These respondents came from the press, other regulators, representative bodies, the Ministry of Justice and lenders:

Name of body	Name of respondent
<i>Today's Conveyancer</i>	Chris Harris
<i>Legal Futures</i>	Neil Rose
<i>Solicitors Journal</i>	Jean-Yves Gilg
Ministry of Justice	Elizabeth Gibby
SRA	Crispin Passmore
IPS	Ian Watson
LSB	Chris Kenny
LSCP	Elizabeth Davies
Legal Ombudsman	Adam Sampson
NAEA	Jan Hytch
The Law Society	Mark Stobbs
Conveyancing Association	Eddie Goldsmith
CILEx	Diane Burleigh
Society for Licensed Conveyancers	Mike Ockenden
Citizens Advice	Claire Blades
CML	Paul Smee
HSBC	Richard Tolchard
Santander	Tracey Carr

Interviews were conducted with reference to a discussion guide of 24 base questions, initially drafted by Spada and amended in consultation with Stephen Ward of the CLC. The questions focused on the themes of: awareness and understanding of the role of the CLC; the CLC as a regulator; the CLC as a communicator; and the CLC in general and against its peers. All interviews were conducted by phone, and lasted between 15 and 30 minutes.

Respondents gave answers in the knowledge that their contributions were anonymous – even though there were occasions where respondents expressly requested for their answers to be attributed. For particular respondents there were some supplementary questions, though it should be stated here that some respondents declined to answer these due to the possibility of breaking their anonymity.

## Structure of analysis

The results of the perceptions audit are set out question by question, with some grouped together for ease of analysis. Where appropriate and helpful, tables and graphs are used to illustrate quantitative feedback. Each section will include a short but broad analysis of the question results, while individual feedback in italics will elucidate particularly helpful viewpoints. It should be noted that this feedback is not always a direct quote, but more the sense of the view expressed.

It is hoped that this individual feedback will provide the CLC with information to aid the understanding of stakeholder problems, and guide efforts to improve communication and regulation.

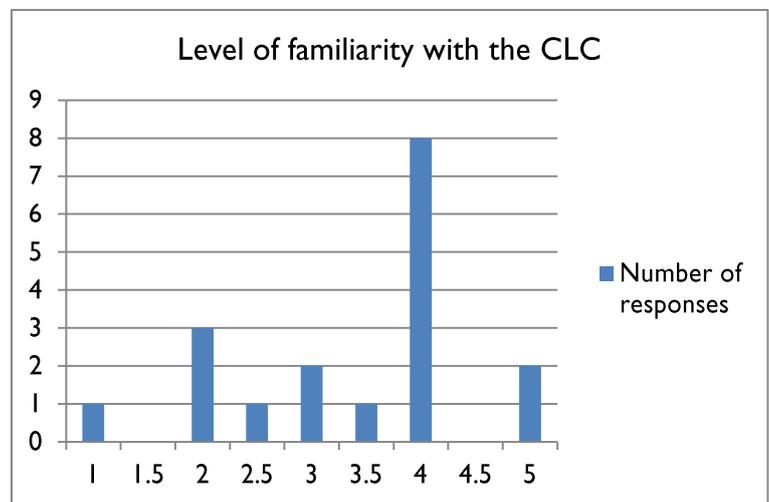
## Section I: Awareness and understanding of the role of the CLC

The aim of the first section was to understand how stakeholders view the role and functions of the CLC. By extension, it was hoped that the questions would establish correlation between this understanding and the level of contact between the CLC and its most important partners.

### I. How well respondents know the CLC

When asked how well they knew the CLC, on a scale of 1 being unfamiliar and virtually no contact, and 5 being very familiar and regular dealings, respondents gave an average response of 3.38. One respondent selected 1, with a further two selecting 5. Positively, the most common answer was 4 – with eight respondents giving this feedback.

Level of familiarity	Number of responses
1	1
1.5	0
2	3
2.5	1
3	2
3.5	1
4	8
4.5	0
5	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>



### 2-3. Level of engagement with the CLC

These questions probed whether the level of engagement stakeholders enjoyed with the CLC was adequate, and whether this extended across the respondent's organisation.

Respondents were clear that the level of contact was relatively constant for colleagues in their organisation; in cases where it merited a different level, it seemed that a suitable level was being maintained. No responses indicated that there was too much contact, or that the CLC was invasive or burdensome in its communications.

Generally there were two clear strands in the feedback to this question: either that the level of feedback was about right; or that respondents could indeed benefit from more contact.

Selected feedback includes:

- *The door is always open...issues are handled very well and in a mature way*
- *Would like to be in more regular contact. Anne and Sheila have made a difference, but we are probably more familiar with ILEx*

- *It ebbs and flows – at times we need closer contact; in the main we have to initiate contact, so it feels one way at times*
- *We ought to work more closely, and we need to be in more contact*
- *Fine: it works when it needs to work*

#### 4. The role of the CLC

Respondents were asked to describe what they perceived to be the role of the CLC. Answers to this question were largely consistent and confidently given, with most respondents stating simply that the CLC ‘regulates licensed conveyancers’.

The question also emphasised that stakeholders in the community are aware of the CLC’s intentions to expand their offering and scope. A number of respondents referred to this when considering the CLC’s ‘role’.

Some of the more pertinent feedback includes:

- *The CLC has been more proactive around lender panels since Sheila Kumar arrived. The CLC could be working more with the SLC to promote the conveyancing profession as a career*
- *A body which regulates both individuals and bodies, with aspirations to develop regulatory services for others and into other sectors*
- *Representing and regulating licensed conveyancers*
- *Regulator for specialist conveyancing law firms but moving into other...legal activities*
- *Protect consumer interest; provide effective regulation for firms; promote the profession broadly; fulfil a role for the wider legal community in looking at a coherent expansion of their regulatory activities*
- *There may be blurring of CLC and SLC roles for clients, but not for licensed conveyancers*

#### 5. Awareness of the CLC’s functions

This question, based on the premise of asking respondents whether they agreed or disagreed about statements relating to the CLC’s functions, sought to draw out misunderstanding of the CLC’s role and capabilities, and thus to identify where the CLC could benefit from clarifying them.

Though not all respondents could answer every question – which is in itself indicative of problems the CLC has in publicising its role – a number of observations may be made here:

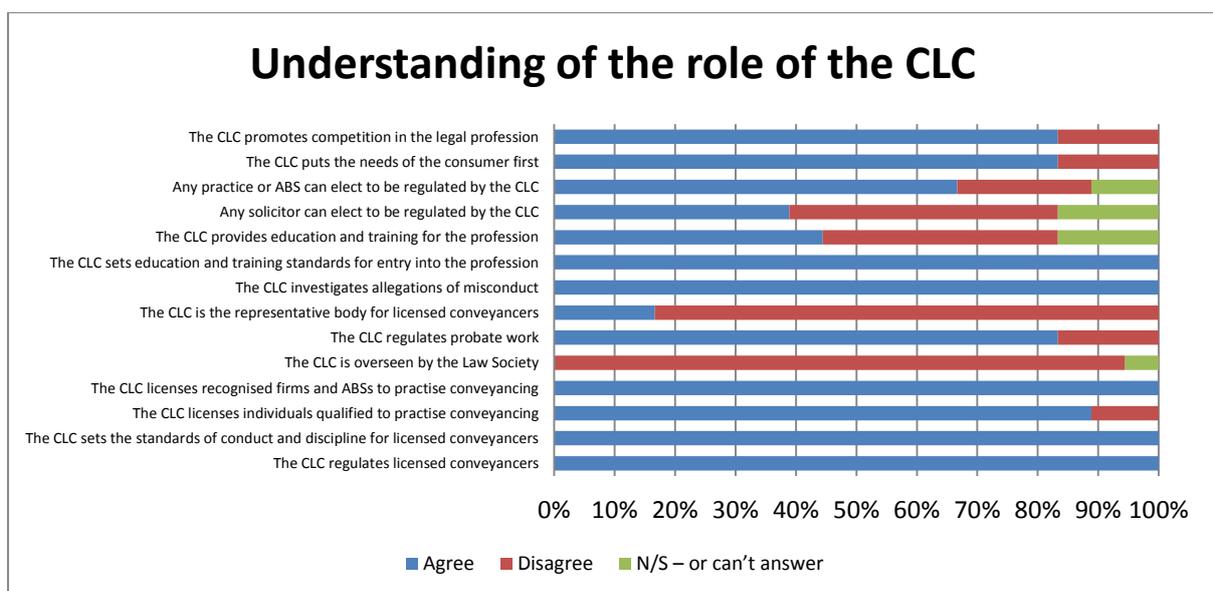
- All respondents agreed with five of the statements. These related to the CLC as regulating licensed conveyancers; setting the corresponding standards of conduct and discipline; licensing recognised firms to practise conveyancing; investigating allegations of misconduct; and setting the education and training standards for entry into the profession

- All but three of the respondents agreed that the CLC regulates probate work, whereas all but one disagreed that the CLC is overseen by The Law Society (that respondent did not know)
- All but three disagreed that the CLC was the representative body for licensed conveyancers
- Questions on the CLC's proactivity in the legal community produced clear results: all but three consider the CLC to put the needs of the consumer first; and all but three agreed that the CLC promotes competition in the legal profession
- Respondents were not especially clear on whether the CLC provides training and education: this was split with eight in agreement, seven in disagreement, and three not knowing
- There were some questions as to whether 'election' to CLC regulation implied or included the caveat that people had to 'apply'; other respondents were unsure as to whether the question only referred to the practice of conveyancing. **NB:** Though this is not indicated in the bar chart cataloguing responses, we have indicated the number of respondents who asked these questions or requested these caveats in the table below.
- Even in discounting those respondents (three) who raised the issue of 'application', there was still uncertainty as to whether any solicitor could elect to be regulated by the CLC

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Not sure or can't answer
The CLC regulates licensed conveyancers	18	0	0
The CLC sets the standards of conduct and discipline for licensed conveyancers	18	0	0
The CLC licenses individuals qualified to practise conveyancing	16	2	0
The CLC licenses recognised firms and ABSs to practise conveyancing	18	0	0
The CLC is overseen by The Law Society	0	17	1
The CLC regulates probate work	15	3	0
The CLC is the representative body for licensed conveyancers	3	15	0
The CLC investigates allegations of misconduct	18	0	0
The CLC sets education and training standards for entry into the profession	18	0	0
The CLC provides education and training for the profession	8	7	3
Any solicitor can elect to be regulated by the CLC	7 <sup>^</sup>	8 <sup>***</sup>	3
Any practice or ABS can elect to be regulated by the CLC	12 <sup>*^ ^ ^</sup>	4 <sup>***</sup>	2
The CLC puts the needs of the consumer first	15	3	0
The CLC promotes competition in the legal profession	15	3	0

\* number of respondents answering with the caveat that you could “apply”

<sup>^</sup> number of respondents answering with the caveat of “doing conveyancing”



## 6-7. Overlap between the CLC and other bodies in functions and responsibilities: a problem or an opportunity?

These questions explored whether respondents felt there were areas of overlap of responsibilities and functions between their organisation and the CLC. These questions were not asked of all participants due to varying levels of applicability. Responses to the first part of the question – whether there was overlap – produced a few interesting responses: namely, that competition is a potential problem but it also has its benefits, and that overlap is an opportunity for members:

- *Yes, there is overlap – it is not a problem but a competition issue. There is an opportunity for members and so for us. We could work together*
- *Duplicational competition – this is a potential problem in the sense that it can produce regulatory arbitrage. But there are benefits of competition: it keeps everyone on their toes*

Supplementary questions were asked of members of representative bodies on the role of lenders in property transactions, and whether this was an area that they might wish to explore with the CLC. The answers were again positive:

- *Yes there is a common cause, and it is absolutely something to explore*
- *Not directly, but clear overlap and we would wish to explore it if of interest to the CLC*

## Section 2: The CLC as a regulator

This section aimed to show how respondents view the CLC as a regulator, and particularly looked at: regulatory standards; reputation; possible conflict between representative and regulatory bodies; a three-word description for the CLC; and where the CLC could do better.

### 8. Setting standards

Respondents were asked to state whether they thought the CLC sets high enough standards for its regulated community. The general response was positive, with 11 of the 18 respondents saying that they thought the CLC did indeed set high enough standards. At the same time, however, a number of respondents asserted that the standards expected could either 'be tougher' or that they were simply not tough enough.

A number of respondents elaborated on this:

- *Quite comfortable with code sensibly pitched to consumer protection, but without imposition on the industry*
- *It appears that there are lower standards for the conduct of licensed conveyancers. Anecdotally, you see firms moving from the SRA regulated environment to the CLC, as it allows an escape from more onerous burdens on providers – particularly in relation to pricing structures, where expectations are less than with the SRA*
- *The CLC could be seen to be tougher – not as tough as the SRA*
- *Most ABSs choose to be CLC-regulated. Though the CLC has a relatively small number of firms there has been no failure, so the CLC seems to be effective in terms of track record*
- *Attention to practice management and accounts were not at the level to ensure competence*
- *You can have a debate – standards are ok and broadly common, but often more onerous for solicitors*
- *The CLC might well set high standards, but it is not necessarily successful in enforcing them. Across the board, on the receiving end, service standards from conveyancing are quite low. There is a disconnect between the CLC and the individuals they are there to support. For those who survived through the recession the volume of work is now like a tsunami: conveyancers work so hard, but they are now overwhelmed*

### 9. Reputation

Respondents were asked for their thoughts on the CLC's reputation. Answers were generally positive, with respondents mentioning 'competence', 'leadership' and a 'proportionate' approach. However, a considerable number of respondents mentioned 'visibility', public awareness and the CLC's comparatively small size, reflecting the concerns expressed in the original brief. A small number also referenced concerns for quality in comparison to other regulators.

Feedback included:

- *Generally held in high esteem by most stakeholders*
- *Positively considered to be a light-touch regulator*
- *Relatively unknown away from the conveyancing and legal profession; relatively low profile with lenders until more recently*
- *Have a feeling that no-one has heard of them, a good and bad thing. Lack of visibility*
- *Strong – leadership is respected, punches above its weight, occupies a unique space, well regarded, clear direction of travel*
- *Seen as a small but very competent body...moves across the ground a lot quicker than the SRA*
- *Those who know it well hold it in high regard for professionalism...[but] not enough people know it...ILEx Professional Standards has a higher profile than the CLC...in terms of relative importance they are probably equal, but CILEx is the much better known brand*
- *Feels like it is not a leading regulator*
- *Forward thinking, innovative, commercial; quicker to move than some of the other regulators; certainly more entrepreneurial, commercial – but maybe some concerns that this is at the expense of quality*
- *Fairly positive in terms of innovation, as took early steps under the LSA; but ability to influence government in marketplace...quite a small voice*
- *Gets close to members, gets to know members, a proportionate regulator and a hands on approach*
- *Not very out there, in background, and not very visible; do not see anything that noticeable being done to support or fly flag for conveyancers – very little press representation*
- *Seen as a hard-working and effective regulator; good reputation in the legal community*
- *Competent, but not particularly important*

## **9a/b. Confusion between regulatory bodies and representative bodies in the legal community**

Asked only of respondents from representative bodies, opinions were sought on whether there were issues arising from confusion between regulatory and representative bodies in the legal sector. Respondents were also asked if they would like to see more cooperation or less, and in which areas.

Though the answers were varied, it was not suggested that conflict exists between the CLC and the SLC; it was mentioned more in the context of other bodies in the sector – namely, the Bar Council and the SRA, and The Law Society and the SRA. One respondent did suggest that the CLC could occasionally slip into a ‘quasi-representative’ position, but they also said that it was careful not to.

Feedback included:

- *The CLC can unintentionally slip into quasi-representative position. It is careful not to do so, but as they are a body there can be confusion in your mind over what the role of the CLC is*
- *For solicitors it is vital to have difference between regulator and representative – this has to be the model for the future in conveyancing*
- *There is still a bit of an assumption that the Law Society regulates rather than through the SRA, but otherwise no*
- *Regulatory bodies can listen more than representative bodies to the regulated community*
- *There are issues between the Bar Council and the SRA, but no issues for us; from public's point of view it is no matter, and we talk about it if there is a problem*

## 10. Trust

Following the question on reputation, respondents were asked for their thoughts on the extent to which they felt the CLC was trusted. 'Yes' was the most common answer, but a number of respondents considered the difference in perception between peers and the general public in their answers. It is also worth noting that some preferred to phrase their answer as 'the CLC is not mistrusted' rather than 'the CLC is trusted', mainly to signal the lack of public awareness.

Feedback included:

- *Reasonably – lenders broadly do, solicitors don't, consumers don't know, licensed conveyancers do*
- *Not distrusted but not positively trusted. Trusted by licensed conveyancers but not necessarily by those looking from the outside in*
- *Not really. Personally yes, but wider perception is probably no, more due to the lack of awareness and capabilities*
- *By important stakeholders, yes*
- *Not particularly mistrusted due to the quality and integrity of its leadership*
- *Goes back to the fact that no one really knows what it is – few members, little coverage*
- *Find someone who knows what it is – not mistrusted, but not generally known in the street; conveyancers would probably trust it*



- supporting smoother change in the marketplace
- working with other bodies in the legal community, especially the SRA
- strategy and positioning in the market / sector
- promotion, public awareness, and boosting consumer confidence
- supporting members, such as in establishing common standards

Some of the most interesting responses are below:

- *Some of it is about visibility, and beginning to punch their weight in broader debates. There were plans to strengthen capacity and capability, and you can already see some of that. Need to carry on pushing that through*
- *In trying to find if a particular firm was licensed, couldn't see a search function on the website – part of the wider impression that it is not necessarily accessible*
- *The approach to compensation – there are questions about the compensation fund and ability to pick up obligations towards consumers when firms disappoint*
- *Bring together vested interests and work with the SRA – to get common standards for solicitors*
- *Could do more work with lenders and lender panels*
- *To be much clearer of overall strategy and positioning for the future – to really define the space that they want to work in. They occupy a unique space. Do they want to punch with the SRA and BSB, or look more at the challenges facing a smaller regulator? A challenge is that they are not the representative body – members of the public could understand the differences between a licensed conveyancer and a solicitor a little more. Who does some of that consumer education?*
- *With market expanding it could do more to grow profile*
- *Need to grip a greater understanding of the changes under the LSA, engaging with other parties*
- *Does pretty well in comparison to the SRA – responds to consultations, seen as a professional body with appropriate gravitas, so doing well...but only thing is that there is no real choice of regulator out there – as a solicitor couldn't be regulated by the CLC but the SRA. I would have to hive off – not an attractive option to have two different regulators with two different sets of rules looking at your practice. I would like to see CLC extend its scope of regulatory activity and powers to make it more of a competitor to the SRA: solicitors would like competition in regulated markets. It is also very costly to switch due to run-off cover and insurance, so although attractive to more, people are put off*
- *Could set out an easier and clearer path for solicitor firms to convert to licensed conveyancer-status by agreeing with lenders*
- *Making sure its standards are consistent between solicitors and licensed conveyancers*
- *Given the size of the community, there is possible work to do with the number of complaints about their members. Complaints are currently a little on the high side*

### Section 3: The CLC as a communicator

This section examines whether the CLC is effective in communicating its views and discussing issues with other bodies. The resulting themes bear out the concerns prior to the survey – for, while there has been an improvement of late, the CLC still struggles to publicise its views and few respondents are completely clear on what the CLC's positions are.

#### 13-15. Communicating with the CLC

Respondents were asked when they last met the CLC, as initiated by the CLC; when they last initiated a meeting with and met the CLC; and whether they were happy at the amount of communication between them and the CLC.

A common observation was that though the situation has improved since Sheila Kumar became chief executive the CLC has not been particularly effective at arranging meetings. In no more than a handful of cases had the CLC initiated contact; it was far more common for the respondent's organisation to have tried to arrange a meeting. In quite a few cases this did not affect respondents' happiness with the level of communication, but the prevailing mood was that respondents would like more contact, and for the CLC to initiate it more often.

Some of the comments:

- *Would be useful to hear from them more regularly*
- *Can't remember the CLC getting in touch; met with Anne a year and a half ago. Hardly receive communication*
- *Not sure of any meetings initiated by them. More mutuality about arranging dates would be useful*
- *CLC come to us – ongoing engagement – happy with existing arrangement*
- *Involved in ongoing dialogue. Happier with the level of communication, so this reflects a change in leadership*
- *Met with Sheila Kumar when she took over, but don't really get anything from the CLC. More information would be desirable*
- *Most of the contact is initiated by us – but we have very good communication. Feel very comfortable being able to communicate, but not so familiar with broader issues so CLC could put something together to promote what it is doing at that level*
- *Sheila Kumar said that she would meet quarterly and send an email – which she hasn't done*
- *CLC is just push communication; often very difficult to find a media relations person*
- *In touch about the MoJ response but not able to arrange a meeting (October 2013)*
- *A slightly more formal liaison would be helpful*
- *Certainly no approach from CLC in last 12 months, but pretty happy with level of communication*

## 16. Modes of communication

Respondents were asked for their preferred modes of communication. As respondents have different needs and communication requirements, there was a multitude of different answers. Seven respondents stated that email was a helpful communication tool. Some reasserted that they would like to be in more regular contact, and that face-to-face was often the most productive form of communication. Others emphasised that all communication needs to be tailored to the needs and seniority of the representative from each body.

A list of the shorter responses:

Email, personal level, verbal communication, mix and tailored, email supplemented by personal contact, email and occasional face-to-face, email, email, phone, face-to-face, newsletter, face-to-face meeting to achieve things, email updates, tailored to subject and audience

Fuller responses included:

- *Formal and informal meetings; face-to-face with Sheila Kumar is very important*
- *Official to official: chief exec to chief exec, for example*
- *Not unreasonable to meet twice a year*
- *The CLC sent out a release about its new council/board members which was bland – press release or call would have had a better response*
- *Popping down an occasional email on something or other in relation to conveyancing is a way of keeping us in the frame*
- *Be in touch with PPDs directly – conveyancers are dependent on agents; CLC could engage much more with agents to help members engage with agents*

## 17. Areas of potential productivity

Respondents were asked for areas where they felt they could work more effectively with the CLC. Due to different areas of interest and expertise, this question elicited a variety of responses, including a number of mentions of fraud and lender panels. These included:

- *Any time there is anything to do with standards in the conveyancing profession as a whole, like a case of a solicitor being struck off, the CLC should be in there like the Law Society with CQS*
- *Co-operation on lender panels, PI insurance and the Law Society portal*
- *In the course of the year where volumes in the housing market go up, there will be more focus on licensed conveyancers. Prospective rather than immediate*
- *Training is a big area and we could do things with the CLC – recruitment issues, where education and training would help*
- *Working more closely on fraud prevention*

- *Regulatory issues out of the MoJ response such as compensation arrangements and insurance arrangements and common education standards*
- *Run off cover, setting up and closing down businesses – area where we could make statutory changes and best practice; in new landscape might see our members working with CLC members*

## **18. Recognition of key stances on regulatory issues**

This was a crucial and very interesting part of the survey: testing how far respondents understood the stance of the CLC on the key issues affecting the regulation of the conveyancing community. Respondents were asked to state whether a number of given statements about the CLC's views were true or false – where four were true and four were false.

The true statements were:

- The CLC supports greater competition in the legal profession and believes that this is best served by a variety of regulators
- The CLC wishes to secure the right to regulate other lawyers
- The CLC would like to eradicate the double regulation and overlap that impedes free functioning of the market
- The CLC believes in a central compensation fund to enhance consumer protection

The four false statements were:

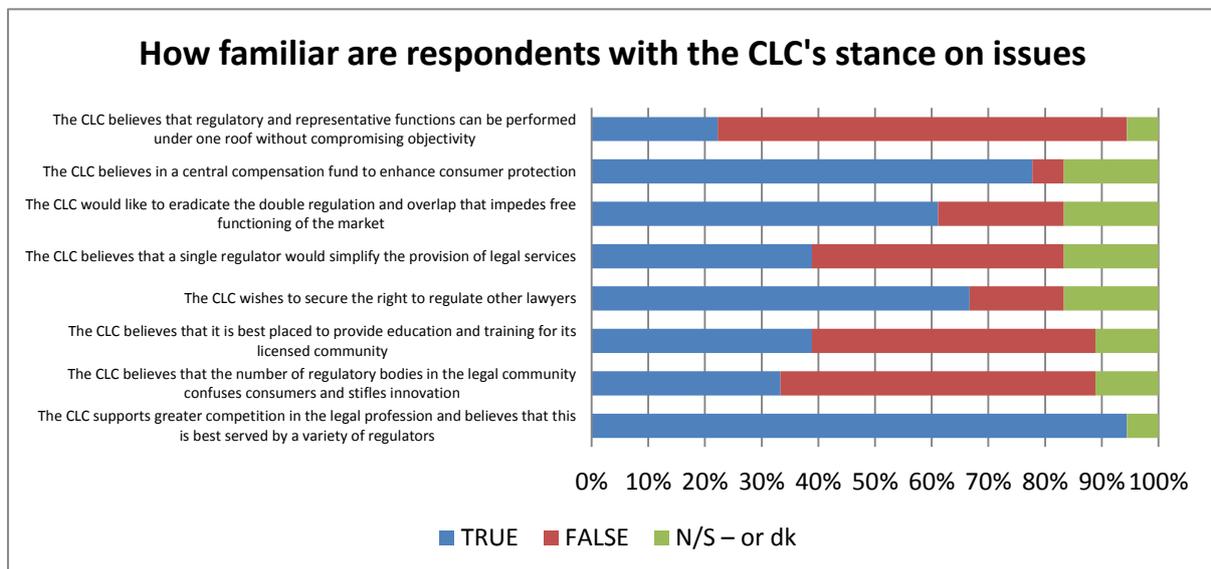
- The CLC believes that the number of regulatory bodies in the legal community confuses consumers and stifles innovation
- The CLC believes that it is best placed to provide education and training for its licensed community
- The CLC believes that a single regulator would simplify the provision of legal services
- The CLC believes that regulatory and representative functions can be performed under one roof without compromising objectivity

A number of general observations can be made from the answers received:

- The true statements were identified by large majorities, suggesting that the CLC has been more successful in imparting their views to the wider stakeholder community than expected or perceived
- The false statements, bar the CLC's stance on regulatory and representative functions, were not as comfortably identified – indicating that clarification on certain issues such as training and education is needed
- In greater detail: responses were mixed on whether the CLC believes that the number of regulatory bodies in the legal community confuses consumers and stifles innovation (six true, 10 false, two don't know)
- Respondents were not clear on whether the CLC believes it is best placed to provide education (seven true, nine false, two don't know)

- It was not widely known if the CLC believes a single regulator would simplify the provision of legal services: seven believed it to be true, eight to be false, and three did not know

Statement	True	False	Not sure – or don't know
The CLC supports greater competition in the legal profession and believes that this is best served by a variety of regulators	17	0	1
The CLC believes that the number of regulatory bodies in the legal community confuses consumers and stifles innovation	6	10	2
The CLC believes that it is best placed to provide education and training for its licensed community	7	9	2
The CLC wishes to secure the right to regulate other lawyers	12	3	3
The CLC believes that a single regulator would simplify the provision of legal services	7	8	3
The CLC would like to eradicate the double regulation and overlap that impedes free functioning of the market	11	4	3
The CLC believes in a central compensation fund to enhance consumer protection	14	1	3
The CLC believes that regulatory and representative functions can be performed under one roof without compromising objectivity	4	13	1



## 19-20. Effectiveness of communicating messages

Following a test of their knowledge of the CLC's views, respondents were asked for their views on how effective the CLC is at getting its messages across, and how this compares to other bodies in the legal community.

On the first question, responses contrasted significantly: answers ranged from 'yes' and 'a lot better' to 'has improved' and 'poorly'. Overall, they were evenly split between positive and negative in tone.

Clearly, these results differ somewhat from the previous true/false test, which indicated that the CLC's communication efforts had perhaps been more successful than perceived. Yet as well as respondents did in comfortably picking five out of eight representations, the general message from this part of the survey – and the more detailed written feedback offered throughout – is that the CLC must communicate its positions on important issues with more clarity and more regularity.

In comparison with other bodies on the subject of effective communication (Q20), many respondents introduced the caveat of size into their responses, and judged the CLC correspondingly. Some therefore suggested the CLC was 'certainly less effective' than the larger bodies, while others suggested it was 'about the same' and 'punches above its weight'. One respondent said that it 'probably struggles – mostly to do with size'. Any caveat of size does not, of course, correlate completely comfortably with the perception that the CLC's communications are in need of improvement – as size could be interpreted as an excuse rather than a reason for failure to communicate views effectively.

Finally, a number of respondents emphasised the recent improvement in communication – and its communication presence in comparison to other smaller regulators.

Some of the highlights of the feedback on these two questions include:

- *It is becoming more effective, but lots of scope to be better at promoting themselves; suffers from a short history and relatively small number of firms it regulates*
- *The CLC has raised its game and is improving, but there is some way to go. It underperforms in comparison to CILEx, but leaving out the Law Society and the Bar Council the CLC is second in performance and ahead of others*
- *Compare positively with other smaller players as marketplace has other louder players. Should be more tactical in gaining coverage*
- *Moderately good at getting messages across; in the background but not at the forefront*
- *Didn't know so much of the above, so plainly no; but big beasts have bigger budgets, so CLC punches above its weight*
- *A lot better, so a qualified yes; punches slightly better than its weight*
- *On a project and operational level yes, but on a broader and strategic basis, no; middle territory – as good as some, and not as others*
- *Profile is lower than the LS but about the same as the SRA. The CLC doesn't do much to publicise cases (discipline, licensing, etc.) – could do more*

- *Has got better – more communicative – probably since Sheila Kumar started; compared to smaller regulators, does very well*
- *Not particularly good at publicising views and so not exactly a major commentator: you have to search for what it thinks, assuming you care*
- *Certainly less effective than larger bodies like the SRA, LS, Bar and ILEx and LSB*
- *Probably not as not out there; less visible than others*
- *Overall it does better than other smaller regulators but faces an uphill task against the Bar and Solicitors. It punches above its weight*

## Section 4: General perceptions of the CLC

The final section of the questionnaire focused on more general ideas about the CLC. It looked to: compare the organisation more widely with other bodies in the legal community; compare the CLC to a particular type of car – in order to gain a more abstract idea of where it sits in the sector; to see what one piece of advice stakeholders could give to the CLC; and how the respondent would think the CLC would describe its organisation.

### 21. A general comparison

This question sought a general comparison between the CLC and other organisations in the wider legal community. Though a broad question, it elicited quite a few simple answers: ‘favourable in comparison to the SRA’; ‘less visible and less well-known’; ‘very well’; ‘pretty favourably’; ‘on a par – no more, no less’.

Overall, the feedback was pretty favourable. Some of it was glowing, with one respondent suggesting that the CLC led the way. Many of the answers were qualified by referring to the CLC’s comparatively small size: some suggested that it was more favourable in despite of its size, whereas other used its size as a reason for rating it more unfavourably.

Some more detailed feedback:

- *Pretty well. For quite a while, if we had been asked for an informal pecking order... we would have had the CLC first*
- *Favourably – appears to be open to suggestions and willing to work with other interested parties in last six months to greater degree than the SRA would be*
- *In terms of day to day, quite nicely; in terms of clout, in competing with LS and BC, well down the heap*
- *Relatively favourably – but has singularly failed solicitors to convert from SRA; failure in original plan to regulate conveyancers in marketplace (regulates around 7 per cent of firms)*
- *In terms of a tone that is constructive and engaging, very positive; but gaining a conversation is not so good*
- *Seem fairly sane, which is a good starting point*
- *Range is a lot narrower, as is regulated community base; does what it does competently; has greater confidence in its regulated community than the SRA; greater confidence from the lender community, but that might be because there are so few of them*

## 22. Car comparison

Respondents were asked to choose a car to represent the CLC, and to justify their decision. Though some respondents did not find it particularly easy to choose a car, they were encouraged to give a description – which often matched that given by respondents able to name a model or brand of car.

As might have been expected, the range of answers was impressive, with Mercedes and Volkswagen quoted alongside ‘bottom of the range Peugeot’ and Honda. A general, average response would probably be a mid-range or family saloon car (Ford came up four times) – with a number of respondents name-checking Skoda (a car improving, or one which has already improved its quality) or quoting the Ronseal slogan: ‘does what it says on the tin’ (three respondents).

The answers were:

- *Not your cheap and cheerful mini, nor your BMW*
- *Eco-friendly, small, quite a lot to the litre, non-descript – small, economical family saloon*
- *Above a Ford, so an Audi*
- *Rover*
- *Skoda, in the sense of having a reputation which is cheap and cheerful but increasingly recognised as a higher quality car*
- *Ford, as it does what it says on the tin – or Skoda, for the improving aspect*
- *Reliable, strong, safe, sturdy – but as we go forward it might not be enough*
- *Ford or Toyota: effective, efficient, steady. Not flashy or exciting, but not meant to be derogatory*
- *Ford – reliable and unflashy*
- *Bottom of the range Peugeot: reliable enough, useful enough, not that special*
- *Honda of some type: very clean, functional, fit for purpose, lasts a long time without servicing*
- *A comfortable family car that people feel safe in*
- *VW*
- *Skoda – does what it says on tin, reliable, not breaking down*
- *Ford Focus – sensible, effective, small to medium car, does the job*
- *Peugeot 305 – A to B, does what it says on the tin but not as well as others and doesn’t particularly stand out*
- *Mercedes – best in class*
- *Car suitable for elderly people – not exciting, does the job, keeps you safe*

## 23. Advice

Respondents were asked for one piece of advice that they would like to give the CLC. Due to the large array of perspectives sought by the survey, the answers were unsurprisingly quite different. They also, as expected, differed according to the more positive or negative approach to the CLC as a regulator and/or communicator. In general, the CLC was urged to:

- work more with other bodies and / or lenders
- communicate its views more effectively and be a more proactive presence
- look back on what made the CLC unique / show that the CLC makes a difference
- not be too ambitious – though other respondents urged the CLC to be more ambitious
- look at the future of regulation and how the CLC sits in that

Fuller answers included:

- *Be tenacious in working with other bodies in the legal profession to make it easier for consumers to understand options – doubt many understand differences and seek to put licensed conveyancers on the same footing as a solicitor*
- *Have a slightly more proactive presence*
- *Be confident in ability and how you go about portraying your role externally*
- *Go and look back at what makes you unique and play to it*
- *Carry on being as ruthlessly self-critical and ambitious as you have been, and carry on working on the communication side*
- *Keep going – three years ago I would have been pretty negative; certainly over last year – 18 months – there are very positive signs that the CLC has significantly improved its activity. However, given the regulatory reforms that are going to come, unless the CLC becomes larger via merger or acquisition, I can't see that it has a long term future as an independent regulator. Regulatory reform coming down the track will see a reduction in the number of separate regulators and while one could see the SRA and Bar remaining, it is difficult to see that all the existing smaller regulators will remain in place*
- *Don't be too ambitious – particularly in getting other rights: make sure you have expertise before you can do it – don't run before you can walk*
- *Show that you make a difference – make it visibly clear to key audiences that the existence of the CLC makes a difference to good regulation*
- *Think through how they could enhance their role in the market which will get more and more competitive: what will the regulated world look like?*
- *Focus on the professionalism of practising members to cut number of complaints*
- *Communicate better*

- *Agree with lenders that if a solicitor converts to CLC, that they can bring panel status with them. Would like this to get through*
- *Be less insular*
- *Get to know your members' issues and start to engage with issues to give members a reason to renew and non-members a reason to join*
- *Meet more regularly with lenders, face to face*
- *Don't develop an inferiority complex. It does a good job – should be easier in its own skin*

## 24. Three words to describe their organisation

The last question prompted respondents for three words that they thought the CLC would use to describe their organisation. It should be said that respondents considered the CLC to judge their organisations fairly and generally positively.

Select responses were:

- *Likeable, influential, integrity*
- *Representative, over-ambitious, well-intentioned*
- *Approachable, challenging, abstract*
- *Valued partner, at times a little whingey, heart in right place*
- *Large, arrogant, trade union*
- *Open, thorough, frustrating*
- *Bully, incumbent, overweight*
- *Good start, previously too focused on disparate issues, unfinished business*
- *Refreshing, willing to work together, honest*
- *Flawed, effective, ambitious*

## Concluding points

### Communication

One of the major themes emerging from the telephone interviews was that the CLC does not organise its communication optimally – neither with its peers nor with the press.

The true/false representation on the CLC's views indicated that stakeholders did indeed recognise more representative views than not (five of eight), which points to an effective dissemination of some of the core CLC beliefs. Yet at the same time respondents were not sure about other key areas of CLC policy (education; having a single regulator), and even the most positive of reviewers encouraged the CLC to improve their communication methods. It was especially clear from the press interviewees that the CLC does not adequately communicate its views on important issues – or in sufficient detail.

Further, it was apparent from all but a handful of respondents that recent meetings have either been organised by them or failed to materialise altogether. On the question regarding reputation, respondents reflected on the lack of public awareness of the CLC; this was also touched on in questions about trust, as the public could not necessarily trust the body if it was not fully aware of its functions, its thoughts or – according to some – its existence.

One must conclude that the CLC's standing in the legal community would be helped by more effective and dutiful communication with its core communities. Mentioned by a few respondents, a targeted press release at each major juncture of news could help to mitigate this problem.

### The impact of Sheila Kumar

A number of respondents reflected on the positive impact that Sheila Kumar has had on the CLC since being appointed as chief executive a little over a year ago. She has improved the communication and organisation of the body significantly. Some respondents were very keen to point out that any criticism should be seen within the context of a significant improvement.

### Clarifying some responsibilities and functions

Generally respondents were pretty clear on the role and functions of the CLC. The first selection of statements did indicate, however, that there is still a significant misunderstanding of some of the CLC's main functions – namely, whether it provides education and training, and which solicitors and firms can elect to be regulated.

It could also be argued, through the analysis of various feedback, that the CLC and SLC should work more closely to define the profession of conveyancing, which might prevent any confusion about who represents and who regulates conveyancers.

## **Expansion**

The CLC was referred to as entrepreneurial and ambitious. In questions requesting thoughts on the role of the CLC, respondents referenced the CLC's ambition to grow. Further, in final feedback, one respondent suggested that the CLC needs to grow or will see itself struggle in a different environment. Nevertheless, this feedback should be taken against the thoughts of others, who urged the CLC to ensure that it had absolute mastery over its current regulation before expanding any further.

## **High standards but 'onerous' enough?**

The feedback on standards was generally positive – with a majority of respondents reflecting on high standards for the regulated community. One respondent, looking specifically at ABSs, referenced the lack of failures, and asserted that the CLC was 'positively considered to be a light-touch regulator'.

Some respondents, however, were cautious at giving such a positive review – referring to anecdotal evidence that firms transfer to the CLC to escape the comparatively more 'onerous' SRA regulation.

## **Supporting change in the marketplace**

A number of respondents touched on the difficulties that the community faces in changing between regulators and lender panels. It was remarked that the current difficulty in switching, as well as the added cost, acted as a serious disincentive. There was, however, a willingness expressed by these respondents to work with the CLC to find solutions.

## **Competence and healthy comparison**

The CLC is generally seen as a 'competent' regulator: this was evident from the three-word description question. The variety of responses given nevertheless matched the car question, where respondents judged the CLC as everything from a Mercedes to a Peugeot 305. The CLC was generally viewed with rationality in the comparison question, mainly seen as punching above its weight or at the weight you would expect from a smaller regulator.

Irrespective of the wide differences in opinion, a main theme of three questions was 'competence'. With 'competent' the most oft quoted word, and a family saloon sitting as the average car question response, it is clear that the CLC is generally seen as an organised and attentive body which is safe rather than exciting, and strong and organised rather than overly ambitious.

Advice on what the CLC could do to improve – both through the 'how to do better' question and the 'one piece of advice' request – was particularly varied, and included the call to support members and current non-members to switch marketplace and take panel status with them. Some of the feedback here will clearly be very useful in improving the provision and expanding the role of the CLC, and paying attention to these questions in particular would certainly be recommended.

## Online survey results



## Summary of the online survey responses

- The feedback from the regulated community was cautiously positive, with many choosing categories illustrating contentment or reasonable happiness ('adequately', 'quite well') rather than clear praise ('very well')
- Just over a quarter of respondents were aware of the CLC's submission to the Ministry of Justice regarding the regulation of legal services. Of the 99 who were not aware, just three could remember seeing CLC commentary in the press
- The website and newsletter are most often viewed as 'fine', but a considerable number of respondents viewed both the website and newsletter as 'poor' rather than 'good' in a number of respects
- The CLC compares relatively favourably to other regulators, with just under half judging it 'about the same' as other regulatory bodies they have experienced. 94 per cent of respondents intend to renew their licences
- Respondents are positive about the setting of standards for education and training, but relatively critical of the CLC's approach to providing practical guidance
- A majority of respondents would like to complete the Annual Licence Renewal and Annual Regulatory Return simultaneously
- A greater number of respondents consider the CLC's campaign for a review of how banks manage legal panels as 'average' or worse than those who consider it 'good' or 'very good'
- 68 per cent of respondents consider CLC regulation to be distinctly beneficial to them, while 81 per cent view the CLC as being 'value for money'
- Students appear to be the most satisfied sub-section of the regulated community, though it is clear that they are unfamiliar with the CLC's strategic themes and policies

## Conducting the survey

The online survey sought to gather the views of the CLC's regulated community on the CLC's work and provision. It looked to examine the views of different parts of that community: students; employed licensed conveyancers; licensed conveyancer managers of CLC-regulated bodies; non-licensed conveyancer managers of CLC-regulated bodies; and others who did not quite fit into such categories but were still considered part of the regulated community.

In an attempt to obtain a comprehensive idea of how the CLC is perceived by its own community, the survey sought to gauge perspectives on a variety of subjects: the Annual Licence Renewal process; the website and newsletter; communication with CLC representatives; the strength of standards; comparisons with other regulators; the execution of functions; awareness of CLC themes and policies; and the body in general.

Spada compiled the survey questions through consultation with Stephen Ward and the wider CLC team, before putting it into an online survey format. The survey was then disseminated to the CLC's regulated community via an email invitation, also drafted by Spada and Stephen Ward, with a number of reminders sent to encourage participation.

170 respondents started the survey, with 130 reaching the end (completion rate: 76.5 per cent). The breakdown is thus:

- 29 students
- 52 employed licensed conveyancers
- 42 licensed conveyancer managers
- 7 others (including a previously registered CLC student, licensed conveyancer managers of non-CLC-regulated bodies, and a self-employed consultant)

Though no non-licensed conveyancer managers of CLC-regulated bodies started the survey, this represents a statistically valid sample of the size and scope of the CLC regulated community.

## Survey analysis

The first section provides an overall analysis of the survey responses – including demographics, website usage, awareness of press commentary, and the rating of CLC functions and strategic themes. As broader conclusions are reached here, this section acts as the focus for the online survey analysis, and indicates where the wider regulated community has specific concerns.

The second part looks at the four subsets of respondents, listed above, in order to focus on where the CLC might be able to improve provision for that particular group. Each section will provide the headline points of the most pertinent feedback, rather than illustrating the total analysis of the feedback. Qualitative responses given to certain questions will also be provided, either in full or as a quote, where useful.

For the most significant quantitative findings, tables and graphs are used to illustrate clear trends.

## Overall analysis

### I. Demographics<sup>1</sup>

The online survey, which attracted an initial 170 respondents – of whom 130 completed the survey – is compiled from a broadly representative cross-section of the CLC’s regulated community. At least 70 per cent of the respondents were female, which corresponds with a diversity profile conducted for the CLC regulated community in the spring of 2013.<sup>2</sup>

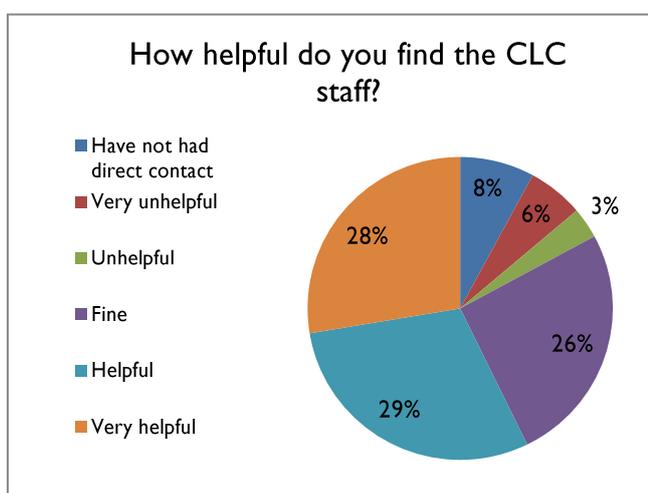
The survey differed from the profile, however, in regards to age, where only 18.5 per cent – a little over half of the figure for the 2013 study – were between 25 and 34. Most responses were collected from respondents aged 45-54, which implies a generally more experienced set of respondents.

Sex	Respondents	%
Male	46	27.4
Female	118	70.2
Prefer not to say	4	2.4
Total	168	100.0
Age	Respondents	%
Under 25	5	3.0
25-34	31	18.5
35-44	39	23.2
45-54	48	28.6
55 and over	45	26.8
Total	168	100.0

### 2. CLC staff

Of 152 respondents who answered how helpful they found CLC staff, 29.6 per cent considered them to be ‘helpful’, with 27.6 per cent rating them ‘very helpful’. Overall, 82.9 per cent judged CLC staff to be ‘fine’ or better.

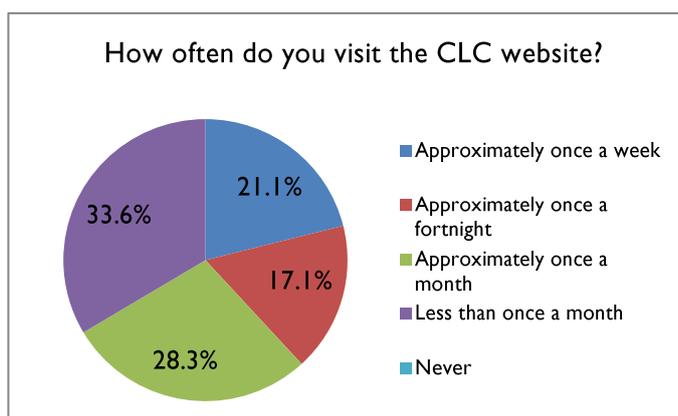
Regarding satisfaction with their last contact with the CLC, 76.3 per cent were either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’.



<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the number of respondents who finished the survey was less than the number who started it. As the questions on sex and age were at the start, the proportions will not therefore correlate exactly with those who answered all the questions. Therefore, the figures indicate the sex and age of those in the regulated community who were initially engaged in completing the survey.

<sup>2</sup> This diversity profile found that over 70 per cent of individuals engaged in CLC practices are women. It also found that the workforce is comparatively young, with 35 per cent aged 25-34 and 23 per cent 35-44.

### 3. Website and newsletter



Of the 152 respondents who answered questions on the website and newsletter, 38.2 per cent visit the website at least once a fortnight. Around a third of respondents visit the website less than once a month.

Over half of the respondents use the website for checking the code and guidance and submitting licence applications, with 19.1 per cent using it to respond to CLC consultations. Many respondents said, through the 'other' option, that they used it to check the status of the licensed conveyancer on the other side of a transaction. Further answers given by respondents included:

*- Look at CLC News, in particular recording for the benefit of our staff any interventions*

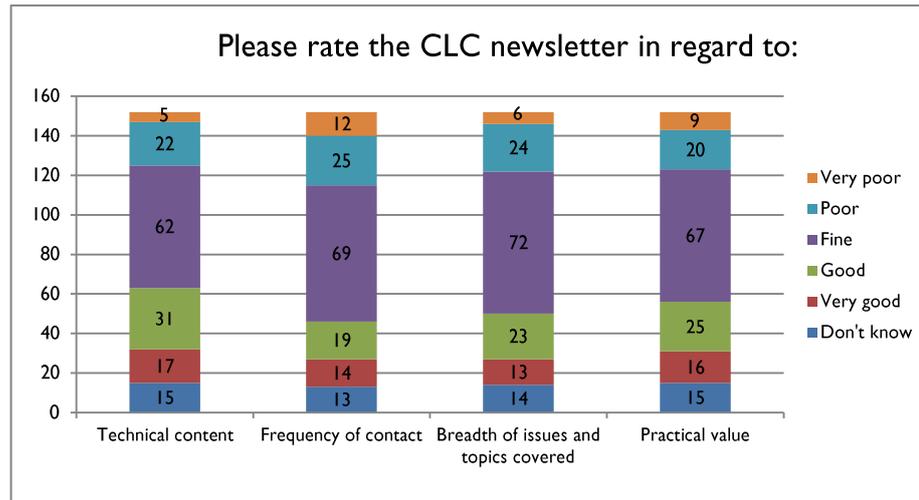
*- For information on course, revision days and exams dates and general news on the CLC*

What do you use the website for? (Please select one or more)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Check the Code and Guidance	55.9%	85
Advertise job opportunities	4.6%	7
Look for a new job	9.9%	15
Look for CP training	13.8%	21
Respond to CLC consultations	19.1%	29
Submit licence applications	52.0%	79
Submit coursework (students only)	21.1%	32
Other (please specify)	27.6%	42
<b>Total who answered question</b>		<b>152</b>

An overall response to the quality of the CLC's website – examining technical content, breadth of issues and topics covered, and practical value – illustrates that nearly half of respondents consider it to be 'fine' rather than 'good' or 'poor'. It might be emphasised that the numbers rating 'breadth of issues and topics covered' show nearly as many consider it 'poor' (30) as they do 'good' (31).

Please rate the CLC website in regard to:							
Answer Options	Very poor	Poor	Fine	Good	Very good	Don't know	Response Count
Technical content	7	22	66	34	19	4	152
Breadth of issues and topics covered	5	30	66	31	16	4	152
Practical value	9	22	62	33	21	5	152
<b>Total who answered question</b>							<b>152</b>

On the newsletter, there were a number of interesting findings. While the most common review of the elements of the newsletter was again 'fine', more respondents considered frequency of contact 'poor' (16.4 per cent) than



'good' (12.5 per cent). 12 of the 152 respondents thought it 'very poor'. Further, more respondents considered the breadth of issues and topics covered as 'poor' (15.8 per cent) than 'good' (15.1 per cent).

On a more positive note, 31.6 per cent of respondents consider the newsletter's technical content to be either 'good' or 'very good'.

More precise feedback of the website included:

- *I used to go on to respond to enquiries posted but this has not been running for an age seeing as it was only meant to be temporary!!*
- *My perception of the content of the website is, in comparison with its peers is that it appears amateurish*

#### 4. Comparison with other regulators

The survey found that 76 of 150 respondents had experienced regulation by another body (so just over half). Of those 76, 88.2 per cent of them had been regulated by the SRA, and 19.7 per cent by CILEx. 2.6 per cent had been regulated by another body.

When asked how the CLC compared, 44 per cent stated that it was 'about the same' – though 18.7 per cent thought it was 'worse' in comparison to 17.3 per cent who thought it was 'better'.

One licensed conveyancer manager wrote:

- *Providing conveyancing services since 2008 has been nothing if not challenging. I switched to CLC regulation in 2010 in despair after years of miserable SRA regulation. I would not still be providing conveyancing services today if I had not been regulated by the CLC for the last 3 1/2 years*

By contrast, an employed licensed conveyancer said:

- *I renew my Licence purely because I have to if I want to continue practising. Compared to pricing -v- support that the SRA offer; I find the CLC very disappointing*

93.9 per cent of respondents intend to renew their licence. Retirement was given as a reason by two of the respondents who do not, whereas another indicated that they did not want to continue due to 'a lack of support'.

## 5. Commentary awareness

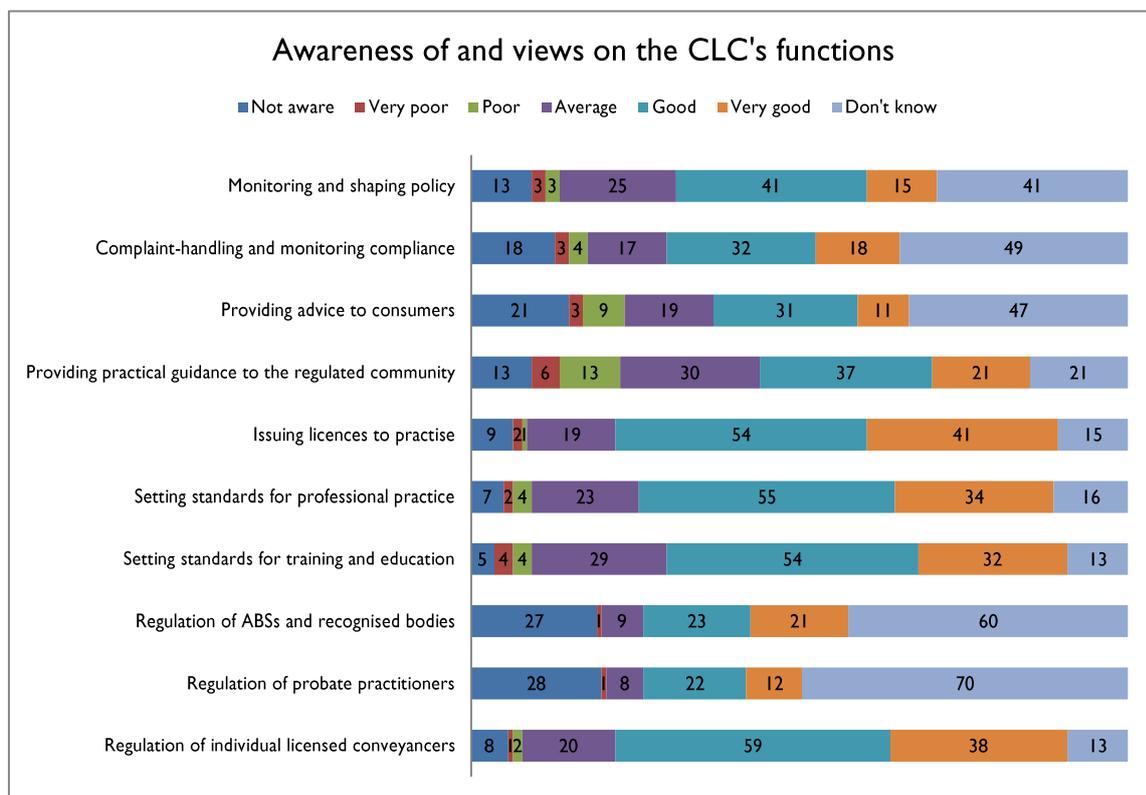
Just 27.2 per cent of respondents (37/136) were aware of the CLC's submission to the Ministry of Justice's review of the regulation of legal services. 23 of those respondents (62.1 per cent) agreed 'mostly' or 'fully' with the arguments put forward in the submission.

The survey asked those respondents who were not aware (99/136) if they recalled seeing any commentary from the CLC in the press. Only three of these 99 respondents could.

## 6. Rating the CLC's functions

This part of the survey probed respondents' awareness of and views on the CLC's functions. It stated a number of areas where the CLC works, and asked respondents to judge the effectiveness of each function. Respondents were allowed to say that they were not aware of the function, or indeed if they did not have sufficient knowledge to assert an opinion.

The results illustrate that respondents view how the CLC sets standards for training and education, and also professional practice, very favourably: 61 per cent (86/141) and 63 per cent (89/141) of respondents respectively view the CLC's work in these areas as 'good' or 'very good'. The CLC was also recognised for its work in regulating licensed conveyancers, with 69 per cent (97/141) rating it 'good' or 'very good'.



One licensed conveyancer manager wrote:

- *Outcome-focused regulation, while initially a little scary (all change is scary to a hide-bound lawyer), has changed the way I think about client-service and regulation. My first concern is no longer, "what rule am I going to fall foul of"? My first concern is, "is this the right thing for the client under these circumstances?" That change in focus has completely altered how I provide legal services, and I think it is 100% to the benefit of the consumer.*

Looking for possible areas of weakness, it could be observed that there was mixed feedback on providing advice to consumers and providing practical guidance to the regulated community. Though a third of respondents did not know how well the CLC provided advice to consumers, those that did judged the CLC somewhat more critically: 22 per cent (31/141) rated it 'average', 'poor', or 'very poor', in comparison to 30 per cent (42/141) who thought it 'good' or 'very good'.

Similarly, 35 per cent (49/141) see the provision of practical guidance to the regulated community as 'average' or below, while 41 per cent (58/141) consider it to be 'good' or better.

Finally, it might be observed that a considerable number of respondents were not aware that the CLC regulated ABSs and recognised bodies (27/141), or indeed probate practitioners (28/141).

## 7. Strategic themes and policies – and a focus on lender panels

This section sought to gauge respondents' awareness of and views on the CLC's strategic themes and policies. It looked at a variety of the CLC's interests and targets as a regulated body, and asked respondents to rate the CLC's work on each one – if aware of its existence – on a scale of 'very poor' to 'very good':

	Not aware	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very good	Don't know	Response Count
Promoting the setting up of a central compensation fund	27	1	3	17	37	10	41	136
Promoting the introduction of an industry-wide PII approach	29	1	4	12	28	11	51	136
Developing a formal regulatory response to persistent low-level non-compliance	33	1	4	13	27	7	51	136
Developing a more flexible, modular approach to qualification as a licensed conveyancer	25	3	4	14	32	17	41	136
Increasing and improving consumer engagement	30	5	11	14	25	8	43	136
Identifying new areas of property work where regulation can be improved	29	3	7	17	22	10	48	136
Campaigning for a review of how banks manage legal panels	17	11	18	20	25	16	29	136
Moving away from direct provision of education and training to focus on setting standards and accreditation of third party providers	34	3	5	21	17	7	49	136
<b>Number of respondents who answered question</b>								<b>136</b>

In all but one case (campaigning for a review of how banks manage legal panels) 49 per cent or more of the respondents were not aware of or did not know the CLC's particular strategic themes or policies. In that one case – of the CLC's work on legal panels – 36 per cent (49/136) of respondents

considered the CLC's campaigning to be 'average' to 'very poor', whereas 30.1 per cent (41/136) considered it to be 'good' or 'very good'.

A large number of respondents issued comment on lender panels. Some of this feedback included:

- *Show some mettle - on the recent panel issues, the CLC's response appeared weak in my view.*
- *We old [sic] very much appreciate support with panel appointments such as HSBC and Lloyds Banking Group. We also have come across a couple of lenders who are not willing to deal with practices of licenced conveyancers at all.*
- *There is little or no awareness of the work on the strategic goals. There are still lenders who refuse to accept Licenced Conveyancers on their panel for no reason other than that the do not accept licenced conveyancers on their panel!*

There were further areas of apparent weakness:

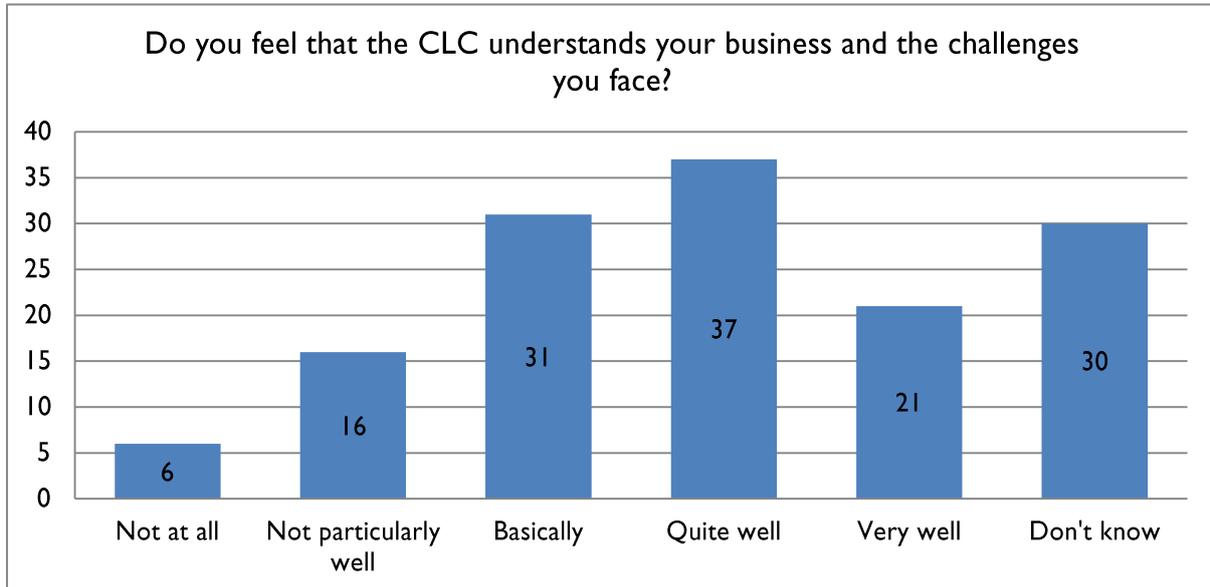
- Rating the CLC's determination to focus on setting standards and accrediting third party providers rather than education and training, 28/136 respondents rated the CLC's efforts as 'average' or worse, with just 24/136 judging it 'good' or 'very good'
- For identifying new areas of property work where regulation can be improved, 27 respondents saw the CLC's work as 'average' or worse, with 32 seeing it as 'good' or better
- There was mixed feedback on the CLC's efforts to increase and improve consumer engagement, with 30 respondents judging it 'average' or worse – and 33 'good' or better

By contrast, certain areas of focus are clearly succeeding in effectiveness. 47 of the 136 respondents see the promotion of a compensation fund as 'good' or 'very good' (in contrast to the 21 respondents who view it as 'average' or worse). Secondly, efforts to develop a 'more flexible, modular approach to qualification as a licensed conveyancer' saw 49 of the respondents (36 per cent) give 'good' or 'very good' feedback. This was comfortably superior to the 21 who thought it 'average' or worse.

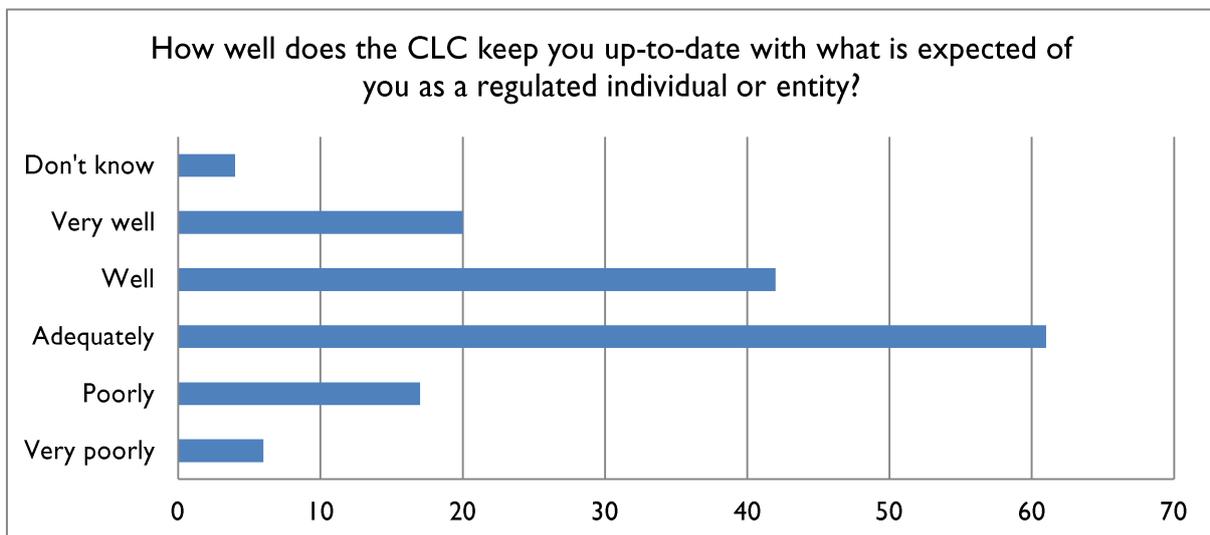
Returning to the main theme, though, this feedback illustrates that the regulated community are generally unfamiliar with the CLC's strategic themes and policies.

## 8. Connection with the regulated community

The views of respondents on whether the CLC understood their business and the challenges they faced were mixed. 58 out of 141 respondents (41 per cent) asserted that the CLC understood their business and challenges 'quite well' or 'very well', whereas 53 thought that the CLC's understanding was basic, inadequate or absent. 30 could not give an answer.



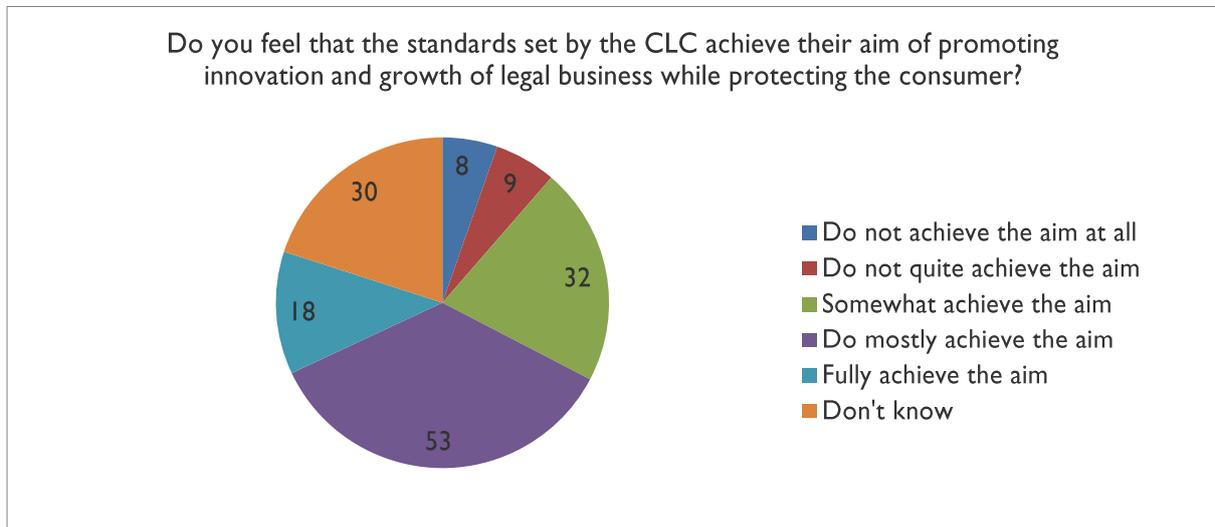
Regarding the extent to which respondents felt the CLC keeps them up-to-date with responsibilities as a regulated individual or entity, 40.7 per cent of respondents (61/150) judged that the CLC did this 'adequately'. 41.3 per cent, meanwhile, thought that the CLC did this 'well' or 'very well'.



Respondents wrote:

- *I think there should be more contact with LCs and the CLC newspaper should be a paper one again so that LCs feel as though they are getting something instead of nothing.*
- *Give more advice in newsletters*

Asked whether they felt the standards set by the CLC promote innovation and growth of legal business while protecting the consumer, 47.3 per cent of respondents considered that they either mostly or fully do so. 32.6 per cent of respondents thought that they somewhat, do not quite, or do not at all achieve this aim.



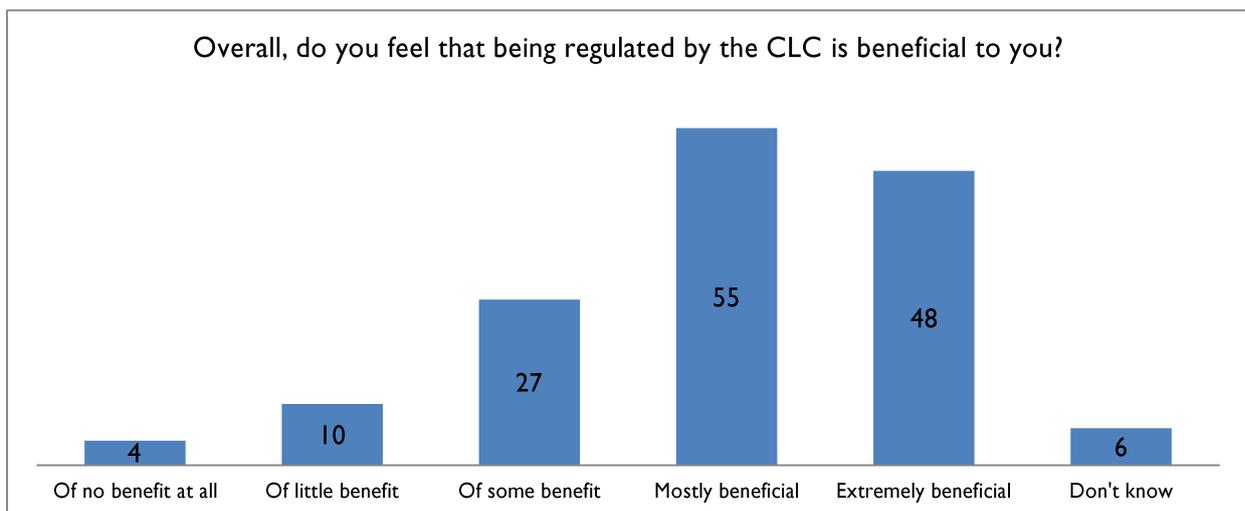
## 9. The forum

A noticeable number of respondents referenced the forum, including those who referred to its apparent disappearance. This is something, therefore, that the CLC might wish to consider:

- *I used to use it regularly, then found that the Forum closed and the website rarely changed - it needs to be more up to date and engaging.*
- *Haven't been able to access forums recently and do not recall having received any regular newsletters/updates (Chronicle?).*

## 10. General review of the CLC

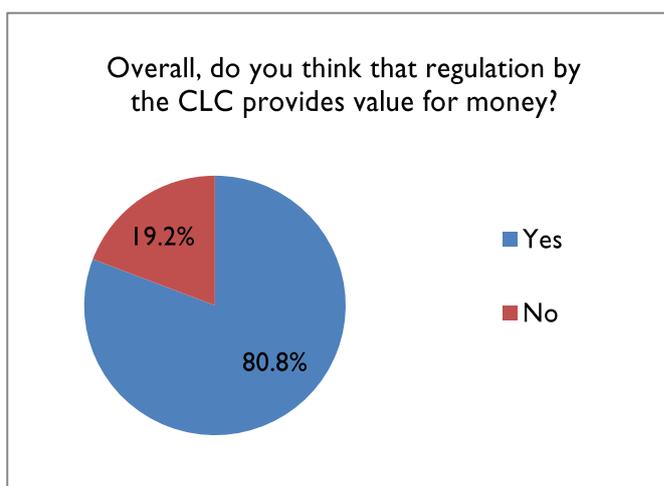
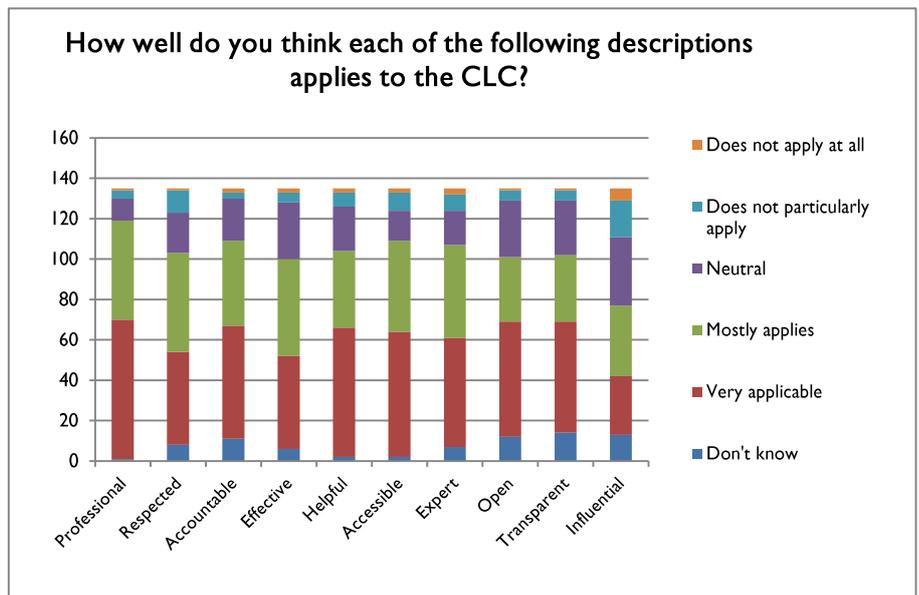
103 out of 150 respondents think that being regulated by the CLC is more than just 'of some benefit' to them (68.2 per cent), while just 14 (9.3 per cent) think it is 'of little' or 'no benefit at all'.



Feedback on the applicability of certain descriptions to the CLC produced some interesting and generally positive results. The proportion of responses matching words like ‘professional’ and ‘respected’ to the CLC found at least 65 per cent of respondents (in all but one case) suggesting they were ‘very’ or ‘mostly’ applicable. 87.4 per cent of respondents considered ‘professional’ to be of particular relevance, while 79.3 per cent of respondents thought that ‘accessible’ was ‘mostly’ or ‘very’ applicable to the CLC.

The word that did not so fittingly apply, however, was ‘influential’. While 47.4 per cent of respondents thought it ‘mostly’ or ‘very’ applicable, 17.7 per cent (24/135 respondents) thought it did not particularly, or at all, apply. 25.2 per cent of respondents chose ‘neutral’. So, although more did have a positive outlook than a neutral and negative one on the CLC’s influence, overall the description is noticeably the least popular word association in the grid.

Description	% Very/mostly applicable
Professional	87.4
Accessible	79.3
Helpful	75.6
Expert	74.1
Accountable	72.6
Respected	70.4
Effective	69.6
Open	65.9
Transparent	65.2
Influential	47.4



Finally, respondents were asked whether they considered the CLC to be ‘value for money’. The response was undoubtedly positive, with 80.8 per cent of respondents asserting that it is. However, it might equally be asserted that almost one in five (19.2 per cent) of the regulated community does not think that the CLC is value for money – clearly indicating that there are areas to work on.

## Analysis of student respondents

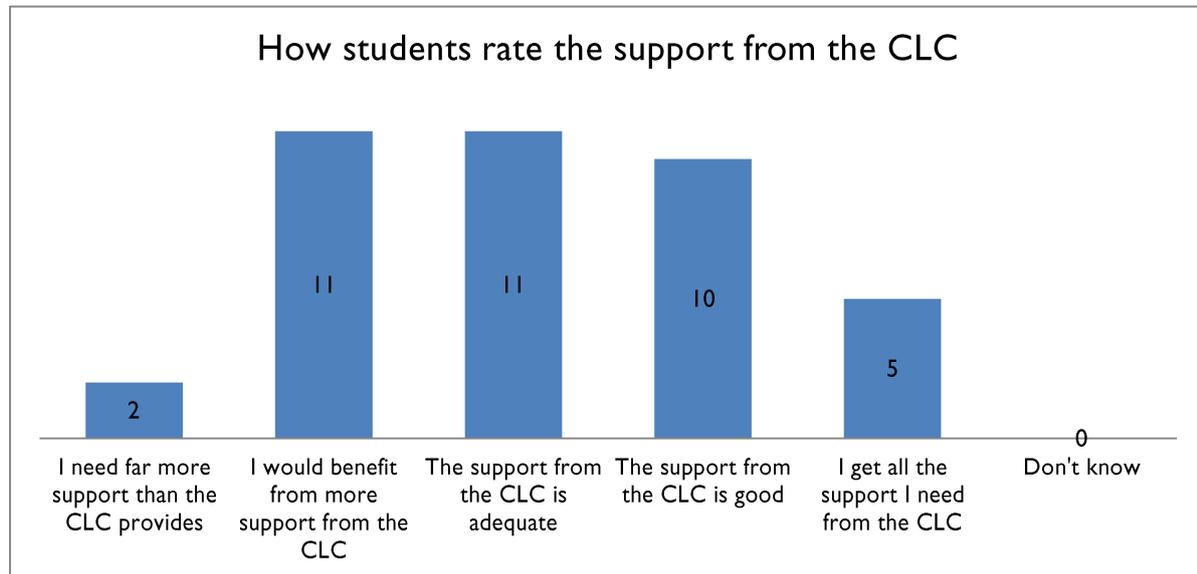
40 students started the survey, with 29 completing all of the questions. There were a number of interesting points in their feedback:

- Students generally chose to become a licensed conveyancer as they wanted to study while they worked (30/39 respondents)
- Nearly half the respondents rated the course as 'good' (46 per cent)
- Respondents would either benefit more from CLC support, or think it is currently 'adequate'
- Distance learning is proving a problem for a number of respondents
- Several respondents have had difficulty with the manual
- The website has a high usage rate (37.8 per cent use it once a week)
- Respondents considered it 'mostly' or 'extremely' beneficial to be regulated by the CLC
- A majority of students 'did not know' how to rate the CLC's strategic themes and policies, which illustrates that the CLC does not perhaps publicise its views and intentions adequately
- 83.9 per cent of respondents were not aware of the CLC's response to the MoJ review, and only one of 26 respondents recalls seeing CLC commentary in the press – which emphasises the previous point
- Respondents considered the descriptions of the CLC, such as 'accessible' and 'influential', to be 'very applicable' in all instances
- Words used to describe the CLC included informative, supportive, helpful, and professional. There was generally very positive feedback

A few of these points are examined in greater detail below.

## How students rate support from the CLC

From the feedback it was clear that students would appreciate more support from the CLC. 13 of 39 respondents (33.3 per cent) need 'far more' or 'more' support than currently, or consider the support to be 'adequate'. This compares to just 15 who think the support is 'good', or that they get 'all the support' they need.



## Why become a licensed conveyancer?

39 respondents asserted why they had chosen to study to become a licensed conveyancer, with the option of selecting more than one answer. 30 of these 39 suggested that they wanted to study while they worked, while 10 were attracted by the flexible study. The other reasons given were:

*- I have been working as a conveyancer for some time so thought I may as well have the qualification to go with the role*

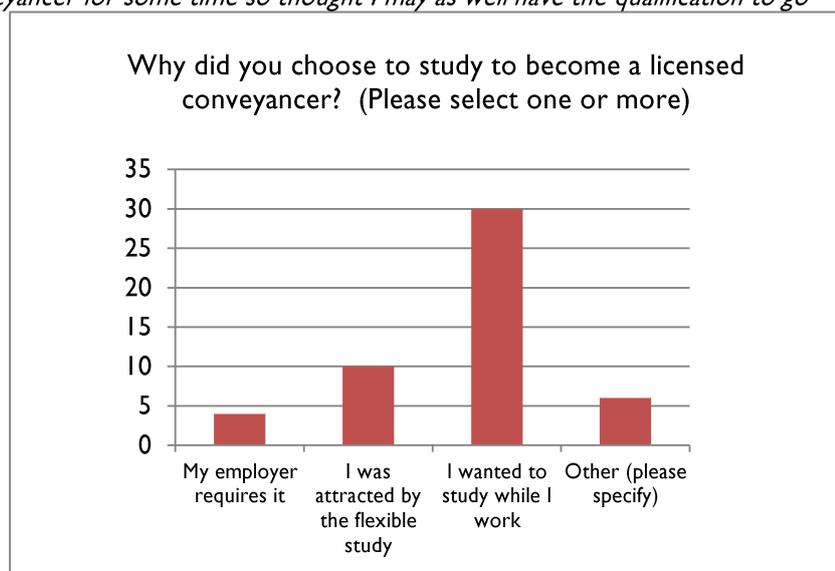
*- Wanted to do it for a long time and got the position within my company that offered me the option to do this*

*- I have keen interest in residential conveyancing*

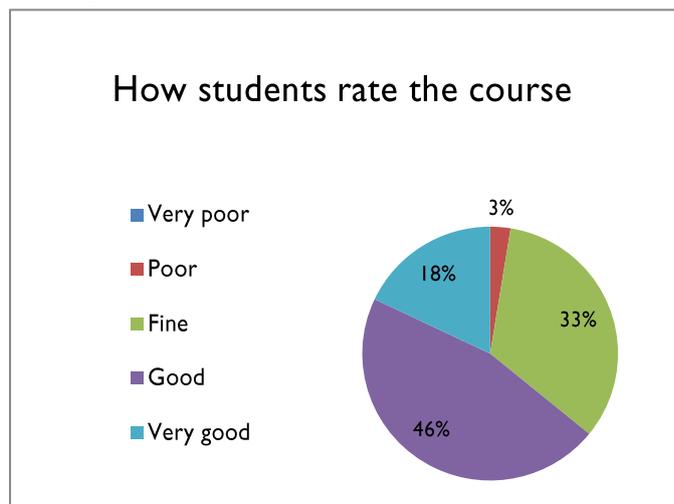
*- To eventually start up in business myself under your regulations.*

*- I have enjoyed the challenges*

*that conveyancing brings and the satisfaction that resolving a problem and completing a matter can bring and therefore decided some time ago that I wanted to qualify.*



## Rating the course



Nearly half of the student respondents rated the course as 'good' (46 per cent), with a further 18 per cent rating it as 'very good'.

Not a single respondent thought the course 'very poor', with just one respondent rating it 'poor'.

## The difficulties of distance learning

Though it wasn't raised in the questions, the issue of distance learning was raised a number of times by students in their written feedback. Issues for the CLC to consider include the location for exams, more direct communication with an assessor or advisor, and opportunities for face-to-face tuition:

- *I completed my foundation exams, as well as the Landlord and Tenant exam with the aid of a college course (Bradford College). Unfortunately, they did not offer the Conveyancing or Accounts Module due to a lack in numbers, so the change from college to distance learning is quite difficult.*
- *It's near impossible to have direct communication with an assessor which is extremely frustrating when doing the correspondence course and requiring advice*
- *When studying by correspondence I don't feel there is anyone I can ask when struggling with a particular topic*
- *Revision days were excellent. More feedback on assignments could be given so you can identify how to improve. Exams could do with being closer to candidates.*
- *I consider the time span in which the assessors mark and return the assignments to be excellent. I am also very pleased in the way in which the Education Department of the CLC assists me when I have a query.*
- *Lack of exam centres and revision days in the north of England. As I live and work in the north east, it is prohibitively expensive to attend London revision days. I also have to take two days off work to attend exams.*
- *There are insufficient opportunities for face to face tuition*
- *The CLC have given me extremely helpful guidance when marking my assignments and have always returned my work expeditiously which is very much appreciated given the time restraints I have, combined with the pressure of work and homelife. The only reason I have not indicated that I get all the support I need, is because I'm not sure how this can be provided with a distance learning course, or whether I can consult CLC for help with assignments and study. There does not appear to be a forum for this on the online resource*

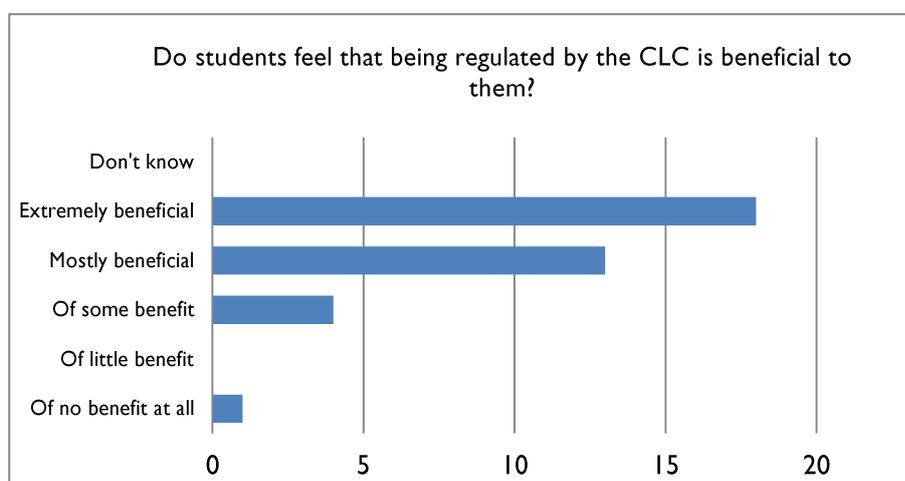
- *Opportunities for more face to face tuition. Many of us, for example, find Accounts a particularly dry subject and it is often difficult to get enthused about whilst studying alone. I think there should either be more face to face tuition over the academic year (eg 4 days ) or ( and perhaps preferably ) maybe a 10 day full time course with an examination at the end of it .*
- *Although this is anonymous, I live in Cornwall and the nearest place to take the exams is London, which is expensive on top of the course fees, exam fees etc. Having a centre nearer, such as Bristol would make it easier for me to take exams and would also enable me to attend revision days, which I understand from other students, are very good, but too much for me to attend with travel and accommodation costs. I know I can buy a revision pack but this is just more paperwork, whereas an actual revision day with discussion etc would be invaluable. I also think that this would encourage more people from the South West to take part in the course.*

### Problems with the manual

Though there were respondents who referred to the comprehensiveness of the manual, a notable number of students referred to problems with the manual / course book – such as the verbose wording or the content:

- *I think the manuals could be less worded and more to the point. In addition, I believe that there is quite a bit of case law missing from the manual that we are expected to know for the exam. I appreciate the CLC would like us to learn externally also, but think that the cases we're expected to write in the exam should be expressed within the manual.*
- *I have found that the course book does not always have the cases that are referred to in the examiners comments on past papers.*
- *The packaging and presentation of the Study material could be improved*
- *I feel the guidelines are not easy to follow and the manual can be a little complex but overall I am happy.*

### Is regulation beneficial to students?



31 of 36 respondents viewed it either 'mostly' or 'extremely' beneficial to be regulated by the CLC. This was a very positive response, as just four replied that regulation was 'of some benefit', and one that it was 'of no benefit at all'.

## Descriptions of the CLC

Students were generally quite positive about the CLC – illustrated by their three word descriptions and feedback on how applicable certain words were to the CLC.

Description	Proportion of students judging description 'very applicable'
Professional	63.3
Helpful	60.0
Expert	60.0
Accessible	56.7
Effective	53.3
Open	53.3
Transparent	53.3
Accountable	50.0
Respected	46.7
Influential	46.7

As the table to the left indicates, the proportion of students judging terms to be 'very applicable' to the CLC was high, with just 'respected' and 'influential' below 50 per cent. It should also be noted that just one respondent deemed the CLC as 'not particularly' influential, and two 'not particularly' respected.

In the three word descriptions to describe the CLC, 'professional' featured consistently, as did words implying accessibility, helpfulness and excellence.

Of the 29 responses for three words, only two were particularly negative. These respondents chose 'disorganised, inept, under-resourced', and 'well intentioned, distant and uninfluential'.

Some final feedback given aptly shows diversity in responses, but the second is certainly more indicative of the positive tone of the student responses:

- *I have to say that there have been occasions over the years when I have felt that paying the registration fee has been a waste of money because I heard nothing - not even receiving the quarterly publication. In short, there have been occasions when I have felt singularly isolated I would suspect that if CILEX Fellows are allowed to practise Conveyancing and Probate in their own right that will have a serious impact on the CLC and its membership. Apart from anything else it is largely an issue of perception.*
- *I am so lucky to have been introduced to the CLC by a friend who is a Solicitor during the time where I could not decide what to do after I had graduated from University. I do not regret at all that I have registered as a student with the CLC, everything in my life has changed for the better, I am really enjoying my course and I am almost complete with it. Thank you CLC for the all support that was and still been given today since the day I registered. All is appreciated very much.*

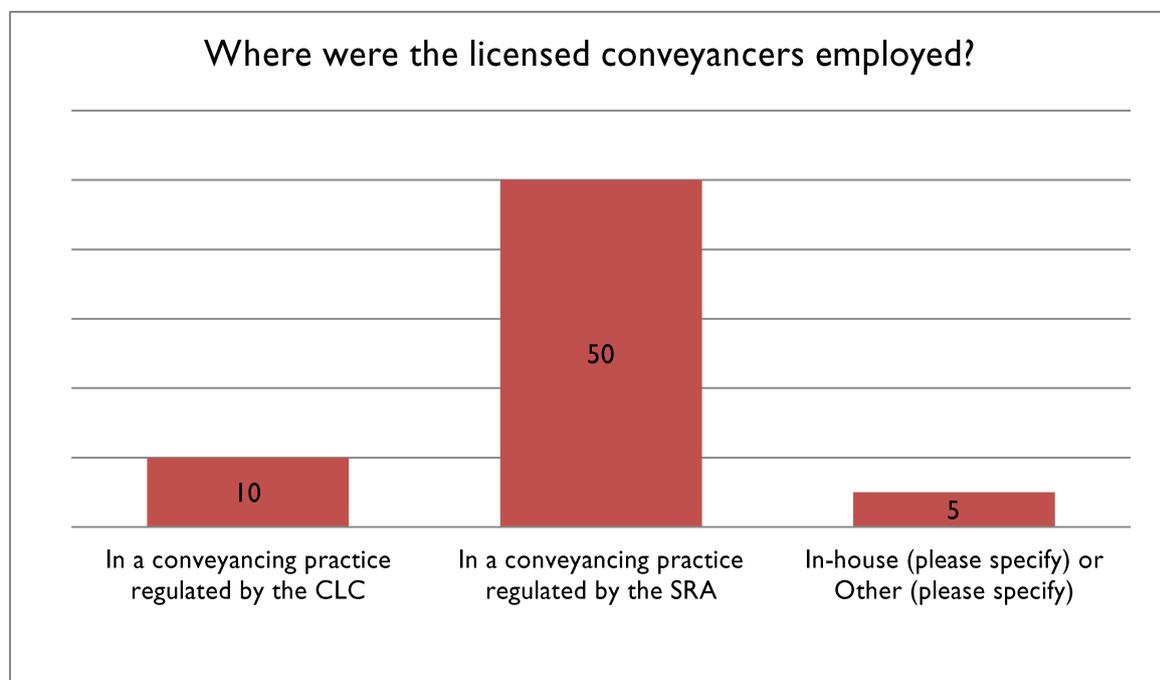
## Analysis of employed licensed conveyancer respondents

69 employed licensed conveyancers started the survey, with 52 completing the set of questions. The most notable feedback was:

- There needs to be more promotion of licensed conveyancers
- The website and newsletter were considered 'fine' in all categories, with 'good' the second most often given answer
- The forum was brought up on a number of occasions
- Only a quarter of respondents were aware of the CLC's response to the Ministry of Justice review, with just one of the further 41 respondents who did not see the response being able to recall seeing CLC commentary in the press
- Words used to describe the CLC included: invisible, 'minor player', 'out of touch', unrecognised, efficient, professional, helpful, respected, accessible, and 'forgotten licensed conveyancer'. The three-word feedback was comparatively critical from these respondents

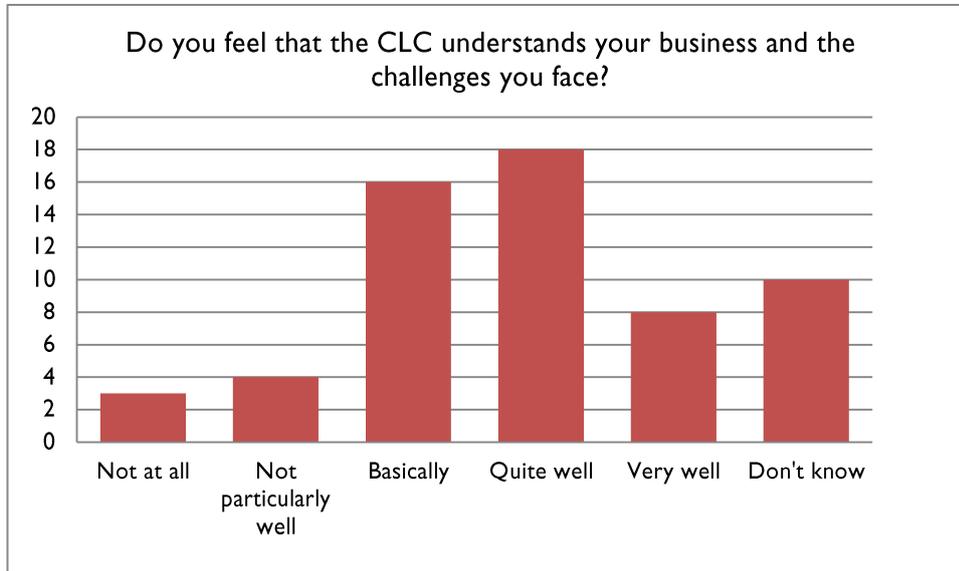
## Where were the licensed conveyancers employed?

Of the 65 respondents who answered where they were employed, 50 were in a conveyancing practice regulated by the SRA, and 10 in a conveyancing practice regulated by the CLC. Of the five 'others', three are employed in local government, one in a construction company, and the other is a self-employed locum.



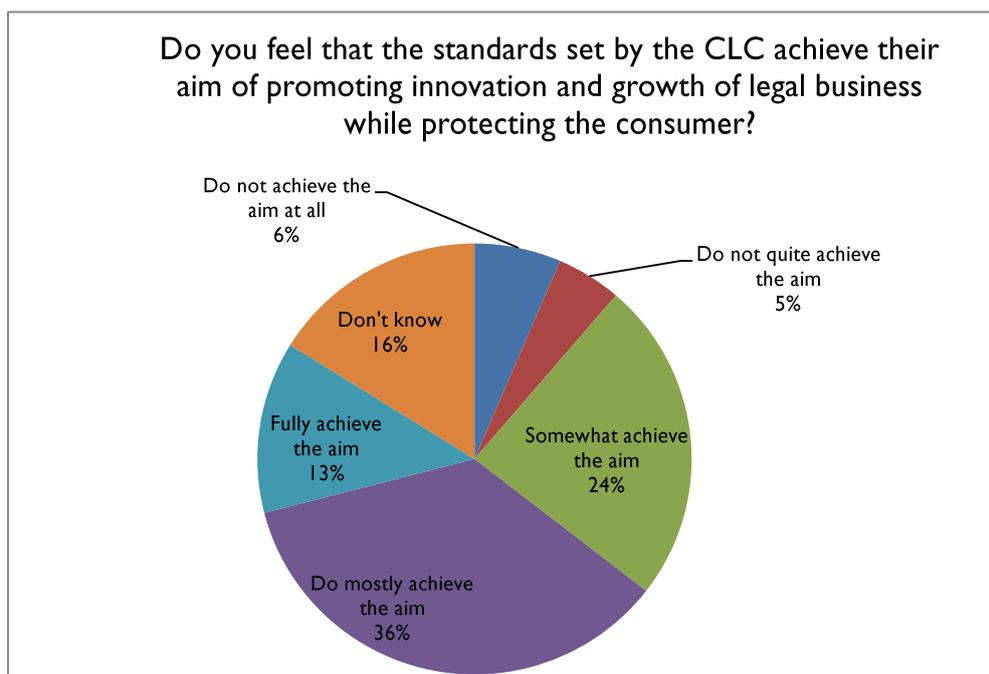
## Understanding the business and its challenges

On the whole employed licensed conveyancers gave a relatively positive response to the question attempting to discover whether the CLC understood their business and its challenges. 44.1 per cent judged the CLC to understand 'quite' or 'very well' the CLC's business and its challenges, with 27.1 per cent perceiving it as doing so 'basically'.



## CLC standards: promoting innovation and growth while protecting the consumer?

Again, employed licensed conveyancers were generally positive about CLC standards promoting innovation and growth while protecting the consumer. 48.4 per cent of respondents view the CLC standards to achieve this aim either 'mostly' or 'fully', while just 11.3 per cent think it fails to achieve the aim at all or does not quite achieve it.

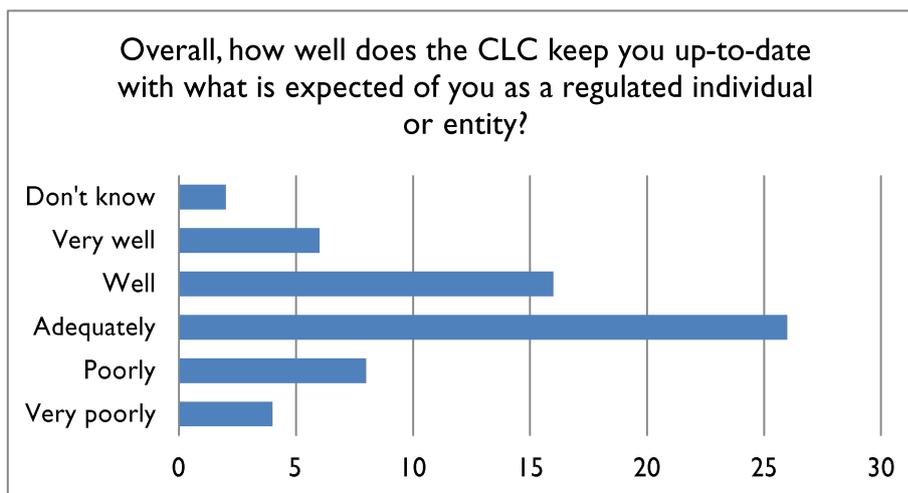


## Contact

One area most obviously highlighted for improvement by employed licensed conveyancers in the quantitative feedback was keeping them up to date with what is expected of a regulated entity or individual. 26 of the 62 respondents who answered this question asserted that the CLC was 'adequate' in keeping its regulated community up-to-date with what was expected of them. Only 16 thought the CLC did this 'well' (25.8 per cent), while 8 thought this was 'poor' (12.9 per cent).

Respondents wrote:

- *The CLC needs to go back to its roots; when I qualified, there was much more hands on approach to meeting the Licensed Conveyancers. Quite frankly, I feel the CLC are so intent on creating a Commercial Board that they have forgotten who it is they represent. I feel I have no support whatsoever; you take my £400 each year and forget we exist.*
- *As a Licensed Conveyancer employed in a solicitors practice it would be helpful to have more guidance and support in terms of what the CLC expect from me.*
- *As I am employed in Solicitors office, I get my information and keep up to date from other sources. Certainly would not rely on CLC, who usually appear behind the times.*



## Licences

A number of respondents issued their unhappiness at having to pay for the renewal of their licence with a personal credit or debit card – and then having to reclaim the fee from their firm.

## Promotion of the profession

Out of the qualitative feedback, one trend was the request for an improvement in support for and promotion of the profession. This did not particularly sit with the more positive tone of the employed licensed conveyancer responses, but those who wished to expand on their feedback were clear in emphasising where they felt the CLC could improve:

- *I feel the CLC has completely lost its way. It offers Licensed Conveyancers no practical support*
- *Whilst consumer protection is fine I do not see how the CLC promotes us as Licensed Conveyancers. Can we not, for example, apply for a Charter in the same way that ILEX has done?*
- *I feel that the CLC do not do enough to let people know what we do. A lot of times I find myself having to explain my qualification to other professionals as well as clients! Legal Executives do not have this issue!*
- *I think that the standards set somewhat achieve the aim, but promotion of the CLC brand is lacking, the public still do not know who we are or what we do*
- *Our qualification I still not very well known. I believe the CLC needs to do more to ensure that both our peers and our clients are aware of what we can do.*
- *Nothing on the website demonstrates that there has been substantial growth of the profession. Nor does it appear visible that they are innovative in any way. They protect the consumer - of course they do, because that's what they're compelled by statute to do, but, in mind of recent notices, appear childish in their communications.*
- *I don't think a lot of people know what Licensed Conveyancers are and don't know who their regulator is. There should be more publicity about both Licensed Conveyancers and the CLC.*
- *As previously noted I feel that it would benefit our general standing immeasurably if we were to become a Chartered body*
- *I feel the general public do not really understand what a licensed Conveyancer is and the CLC should consider making more effort to bringing this to the public's attention so that when they are seeking conveyancing assistance they are aware that a licensed Conveyancer is a specialist lawyer*

## Three-word description and concluding comments

Again, though the wider feedback was generally positive, the three-word descriptions provided by employed licensed conveyancers were often quite critical. Words such as professional and helpful cropped up on a significant number of occasions, but a sample of the more critical feedback illustrates a relatively broad disenchantment:

- *Invisible (to the general public), unproactive (in promoting our profession), unproductive (in raising our profile to the public)*
- *Distant, Helpful if needed*
- *Minor player, reactive*
- *Out of touch*

- *Council, Licensed, Conveyancers - unfortunately there is no more I can add. I would like to say Professional, Helpful, Informative but I have never found this to be the truth. As I work for a Law firm who are regulated by the SRA I have had to phone them on a few occasion and they have been very help with the answer. The one occasion I tried to phone the CLC they did not help at all.*
- *Slowly getting better*
- *Professional, Unrecognised, Underfunded*
- *Necessary, disappointing*
- *Outdated & in need of inspiration*
- *Lost in regulation*
- *Adequate for Profession*
- *"notasgood" "as" "theyusedtobe"*
- *forgotten licensed conveyancer*

Respondents' concluding comments also highlighted certain dissatisfaction:

- *I would happily discuss my survey if requested. I am so disappointed by the CLC as my professional body*
- *I feel that the licence fee we pay is extortionate compared to the service we get as licence holders. The only way we can have letters after our names it to become a member of the society of Licenced Conveyancers which we then have to pay more for. Solicitors and Legal Executives get this from the moment they qualify. I would have thought given the length of time the CLC has now been around they would have been able to incorporate the society into our membership fees and allow us the privilege of feeling that we actually achieved something with our qualifications.*
- *They don't provide value, they provide a certificate which enables me to practice, aside of that I cannot see must advantage*
- *CLC provides a vital alternate route into the legal profession, but remains in danger of being seen as 'niche'. I feel the CLC would do well to continue to work to expand into other areas of law.*
- *Should not be delving into other areas of law beyond conveyancing and probate*

## Analysis of licensed conveyancer manager respondents

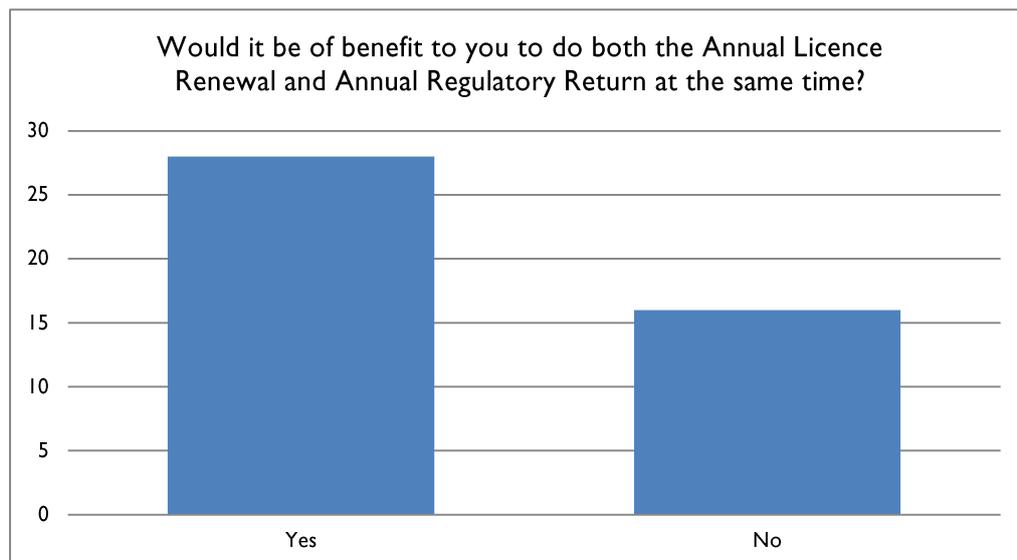
47 licensed conveyancer managers started the survey, with 42 completing the questions (89.4 per cent). The headline points were:

- Respondents would generally prefer to do the Annual Licence Renewal and Annual Regulatory Return concurrently
- In the review of the effectiveness of different areas of CLC focus, the largest share of respondents (30.2 per cent) considered the CLC's record 'poor' on campaigning for a review of how banks manage legal panels. Just 14 per cent said the CLC's record was 'good', and 16.3 per cent considered it 'very poor'. Qualitative feedback illustrated this point
- A number of respondents urge the CLC to focus more on smaller firms and sole practitioners
- The website and newsletter were considered 'fine' in all categories, but 'poor' was the second most popular result in every category
- Only one of 26 respondents recalls seeing CLC commentary in the press, which again illustrates that the CLC has not sufficiently publicised its views on important issues
- Words used to describe the CLC: helpful, professional, approachable, efficient – but also: 'could do better', uninspiring, 'not very supportive' (x2)

A number of these points are explored below.

### Annual Licence Renewal and Annual Regulatory Return

A majority of respondents (28 to 16 ~ 63.6 per cent) said that it would be of benefit to them to do the Annual Licence Renewal and Annual Regulatory Return simultaneously.

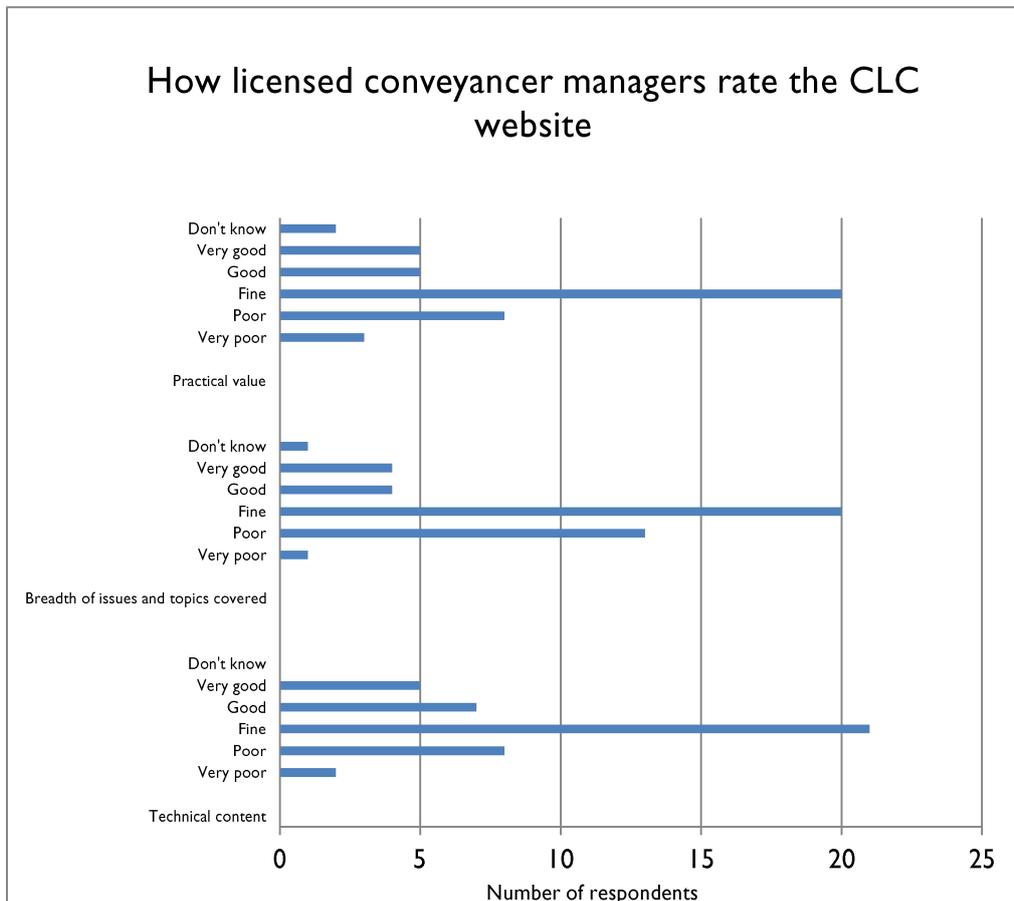


The comments reinforced the quantitative data results, though, that respondents were not necessarily convinced that combining the two would be a good idea:

- *They take quite a bit of time and to have to take so much time altogether away from helping clients would not be good.*
- *I cannot see it would particularly make these two jobs easier or quicker by putting them together.*
- *If it made it simpler and quicker. It is ok doing them separately.*
- *It's a busy time of year when the licenses need renewing it would be far easier to have both processes done together in one go.*
- *Please spread the load!*

### The CLC website and newsletter

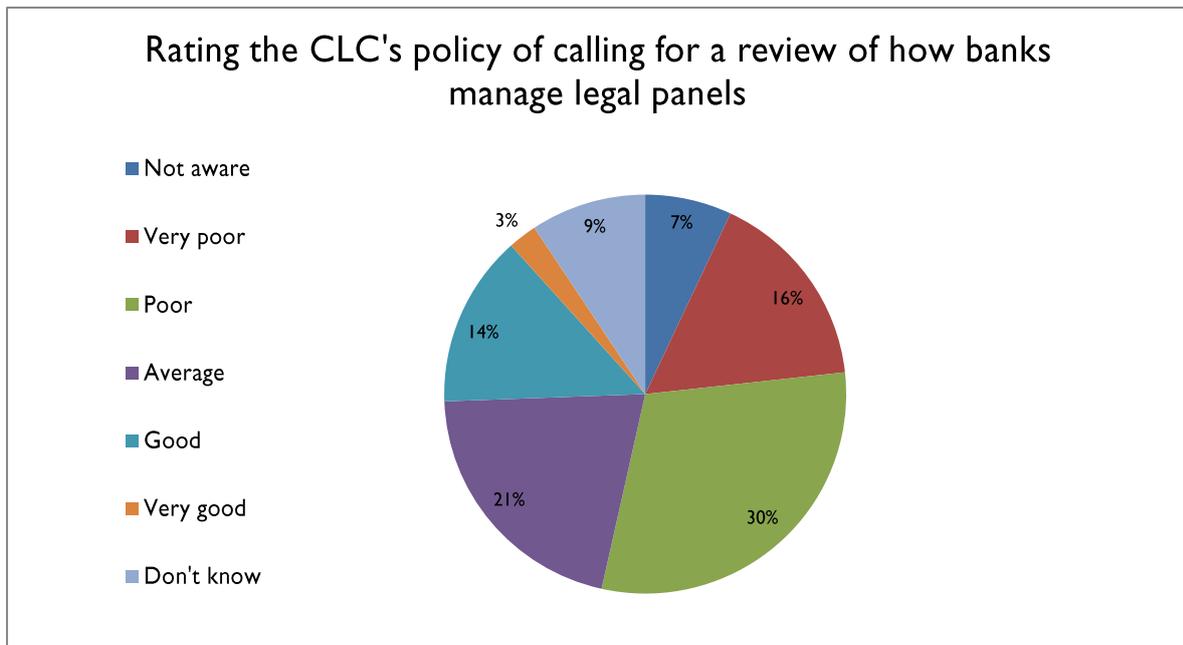
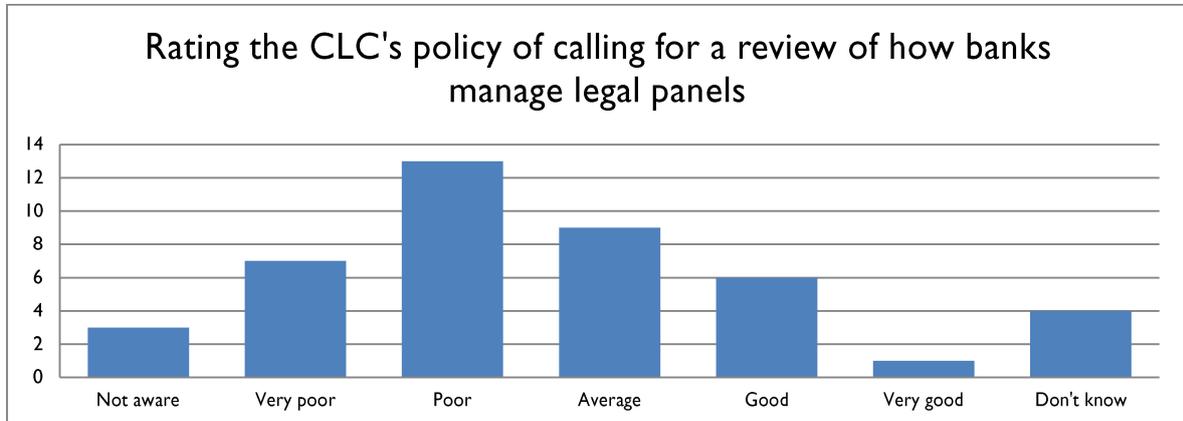
Of all the groups surveyed, the licensed conveyancer managers were the most critical of the website and newsletter. Reviewing the website, which is illustrated in the below graph, respondents judged the three quoted facets (practical value, breadth of issues and topics covered, and technical content) mostly as 'fine', but in each case the second most popular answer was 'poor' rather than 'good' or 'very good'.



Similarly, with the newsletter, which had the extra criterion of frequency of contact, the second most popular answer after 'fine' was 'poor'.

## Legal panels review

In the review of the CLC's strategic themes and policies, licensed conveyancer managers were particularly critical of the way in which the CLC has sought a review of how banks manage legal panels. The most popular answer was that the CLC has handled this 'poorly' (13 of 43 respondents). Just 7 of the 43 respondents considered the CLC's approach 'very good' or 'good'.



Some of the comments through the licensed conveyancer manager feedback focused on this:

- *The CLC has not been able to get mortgage lenders to put CLC-licensed sole practitioner firms on their panel which greatly reduces the ability of such firms to obtain business and prevents any significant expansion*
- *Could do more re lenders panel appointments, eg HSBC, Paragon, Kensington, bridging companies generally ..... none of whom will instruct licensed conveyancers*
- *We old [sic] very much appreciate support with panel appointments such as HSBC and Lloyds Banking Group. We also have come across a couple of lenders who are not willing to deal with practices of licensed conveyancers at all.*

- *Nothing has happened re the instructions from HSBC for well over a year.*
- *Feel more need to be done in educating lenders about the superior benefit that LC offer them*
- *Fight the licensed conveyancers corner with lenders, why are we not accepted on HSBC (despite the panel manager being a licensed conveyancers firm) panel amongst others?*
- *BE AVAILABLE TO TAKE A PHONE CALL - WORK WITH YOUR LC'S NOT AGAINST THEM HELP US IN THE FIGHT AGAINST LENDERS AND THEIR PANELS!!*
- *Make some small lenders accept us onto their panel*
- *There is little or no awareness of the work on the strategic goals. There are still lenders who refuse to accept Licenced Conveyancers on their panel for no reason other than that the do not accept licenced conveyancers on their panel!*
- *I do not know what the CLC are doing with regard to panel management but it is an important area that puts practices at risk and should be pursued*
- *I think consumer choice is being eroded by the Lender Panel issue and I think the SLC and the Law Society should push for compulsory separate representation.*
- *CLC needs a person/team devoted to ensuring all lenders recognise and accept licensed conveyancers. Otherwise licensed conveyancers (and the CLC) will not exist. Current problem lenders include HSBC, Paragon, Kensington, most bridging lenders, Aldermore*

### **Sole practitioners and smaller firms**

Some of the feedback concentrated on a perceived lack of focus on smaller firms and sole practitioners. This was not necessarily backed up elsewhere in the survey, but the vehemence of the feedback merits inclusion and focus here:

- *The CLC has not been able to get mortgage lenders to put CLC licensed sole practitioner firms on their panel which greatly reduces the ability of such firms to obtain business and prevents any significant expansion...*
- *I think they protect the consumer, which is essential, but I do not feel they do anything to promote growth of legal business (except perhaps large organisations) certainly not for small sole practitioners...*

*...It can be hard being so highly regulated but I think it is good for the profession and the CLC is far better than the SRA. Whilst I appreciate the CLC have a regulatory role not a support role I think there have been moves recently to be more helpful and this is very welcome. Some of the aims of the CLC appear to be more pro large organisations than small firms and I think a more even balance would be fairer and promote more consumer choice.*

## Practice inspectors and CLC staff

Feedback on practice inspectors and nominated contacts was mixed:

- *Our practice inspector could not be more helpful. She offers practical, knowledgeable, commercially-sound information whenever we query her. Her regulatory queries are clear and easy to understand. The difference between CLC regulation and SRA regulation is day and night.*
- *I am a bit disappointed in that once you qualify you are a bit left alone to get on with it. I have my own practise and have found it hard work and sometimes a shoulder would be nice*
- *When they deal with issues of professional conduct raised by other lawyers I find the inability of the caseworkers to make decisions and assess the quality of the evidence disappointing - they seem to be an endless postbox just forwarding letters endlessly.*
- *Your receptionist is fantastic, always sounds like she knows who I am, though she can't possibly remember us all! Wayner Pearson has always been extremely helpful and shows a common sense approach which is very refreshing compared to our experiences 6 years ago.*
- *If you call, the staff are very efficient helpful and professional. It is sometimes hard to get any response from the person believed to be our nominated contact (do we even have one of these any more? You told us we had one, that person left but you didn't tell us, you never told us we had another one but published the fact that firms have one - not very satisfactory!)*
- *Never available when you need someone to talk to – very unapproachable*
- *I like the idea of having an inspector that I can speak to.*

## Analysis of other respondents

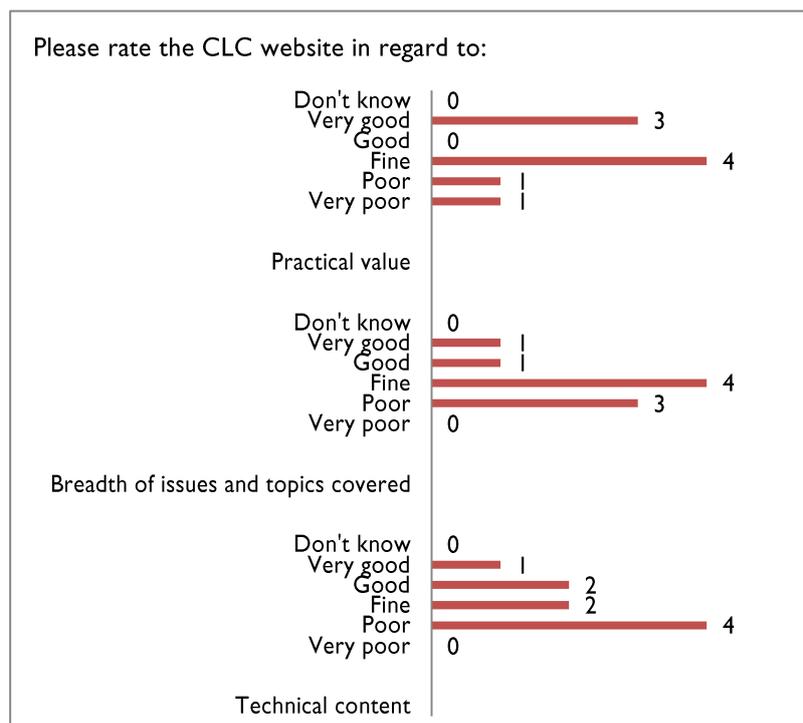
There were 14 respondents who started the survey qualifying themselves as ‘other’: these included a previously registered CLC student, licensed conveyancer managers of non-CLC-regulated bodies, and a self-employed consultant. Only seven of these 14 completed the survey, so the sample size for this section is relatively small.

Nevertheless, there were a number of points and specific pieces of feedback which are of particular interest:

- The website rated ‘poorly’ on technical content
- The newsletter was judged ‘poor’ on frequency of contact
- One respondent – whose feedback will likely be highly useful in its full form – argued for better support for distance learning
- Respondents urge the CLC to promote the conveyancing business better and also conveyancers’ role in the legal community
- It is also urged that licensed conveyancers have commensurate standing in the legal community to solicitors
- Three out of seven respondents thought that the CLC understood their business ‘not at all’ or ‘not particularly well’
- Words used to describe the CLC included helpful and professional – but also ‘could try harder’

### Website’s technical content

Though the sample size was only nine respondents, it is worth noting that four of these nine respondents consider the website’s technical content to be ‘poor’. Three of the nine also consider the breadth of issues and topics covered on the website to be ‘poor’, which is just fewer than the four who consider it to be ‘fine’. The use of the forum cropped up again when respondents were asked for website activity.



## Promoting the growth of legal business

One respondent gave particularly interesting feedback on the extent to which the CLC fails to promote the growth of legal business, touching on legal panels and litigation:

- *I believe that the CLC fully achieves its aim in protecting the consumer. However, I believe that the CLC do not achieve its aim in promoting growth of legal business. I say this for 2 reasons: (1) issues that affect CLC regulated Firms such as HSBC and other smaller lenders/lenders panels remains unresolved thus impacted upon growth of those firms (b) the issue relating to the third reserved legal activity, namely litigation remains unresolved thus impacting upon the scope of the CLC regulated firm.*

## Promoting the profession

Other respondents gave sharp feedback on how the CLC could do more to promote the profession of licensed conveyancing:

- *Still many consumers are unaware that Licensed Conveyancers are legally qualified professionals who specialise in dealing with property & probate matters. If you ask most consumers we are little more than glorified estate agents. Nothing is being done to change this attitude. Even other legal professionals still tend to "look down their noses" at what they consider the poor relations of the legal profession.*
- *I think that the consumer is adequately protected, but I do not think that the CLC does enough to ensure that LCs are given equivalent status to solicitors in the probate and mortgage fields.*

## Prior claims records

One respondent asserted that the CLC should not give practice licences to solicitors who would like to set up as licensed conveyancers but have prior claims records:

- *I do not think the CLC should grant practice licences to solicitors who are attempting to set up as Licensed Conveyancers if they have prior claims records.*

## Three-word descriptions

The offered three-word descriptions were thus:

- *Professional, knowledgeable, helpful*
- *Uncertain, unhelpful, disappointing*
- *Helpful, friendly efficient staff*
- *Helpful, accessible*
- *Not particularly effective*
- *Professional, helpful, supportive*
- *Could try harder*

## Recommendations

The aim of this section is to identify areas where the CLC could improve its existing functions and suggest where it could implement solutions to current problems. Based on the main strands of feedback emerging from the perceptions audit, we issue four interlinking recommendations which will hopefully provide a platform to take the CLC to the next level in reputation and engagement.

### i. Clarify and communicate the future strategy

While the setting of a future strategy is far from the remit of this report, we feel it is imperative that the CLC clearly articulates its key strategic policies and objectives outlined in the 2013-2014 Business Plan.

These priorities should be actively communicated to members and stakeholders and serve as the key pillars of all content, communications, thought leadership and PR. For example, alongside or on the website's 'About us' page, the CLC could introduce a section to define the CLC's key themes of protecting the consumer, supporting innovation and strengthening infrastructure. This would show both the regulated community and wider industry stakeholders exactly what the CLC represents and seeks to campaign for.

### ii. Adopt a systematic approach to engagement

Though some phone respondents did not mind that the CLC is rarely the first organisation to get in touch, such an imbalance in communication portrays the CLC as a passive rather than active organisation. To improve the impact that the CLC can have in the legal community, it is recommended that the CLC:

- **Establish (quarterly / biannual) roundtables or meetings / briefings**

The CLC should consider founding a quarterly or biannual roundtable which would bring together the most important stakeholders in the conveyancing industry: senior members and executives from regulatory and representative bodies, consumer body representatives, etc.

Each roundtable would be on a different extant theme or topic. Leading these discussions would place the CLC at the centre of important issues, and gathering important stakeholders would allow it to keep up with peers and contemporaries.

Such regular, structured and productive dialogue should also enable senior CLC staff to think about the CLC's place in the market – now and in the future.

- **Improve structure of contact and meetings**

Aside from the more formal engagement above, a simple way of improving the CLC's standing in the legal community would be to initiate informal contact more often with peer organisations.

Though increased activity would not necessarily directly improve wider public perception of the CLC, the CLC would appear more of a 'leading regulator' if it led bi- or multilateral communications.

Further, as indicated in the respondent interviews, the CLC should tailor the frequency of contact to the level of engagement required with particular bodies – for it will wish and need to communicate with certain bodies more often than others.

### iii. Communicate more closely with members

To communicate more effectively with the regulated community on issues like distance learning and policy and strategy areas, it is recommended that the CLC:

- **Establish member-comprised working groups to help devise solutions for ALR/ARR and distance learning issues**  
To engage the regulated community and address issues raised in the audit – namely the potential combination of the Annual Licence Renewal and Annual Regulatory Return, and the referenced troubles with distance learning – the CLC could institute working groups comprised of members of the regulated community. These working groups could consult the issues at hand and propose solutions to the CLC.
- **Adopt a content and priorities led approach to communication**  
The CLC should ensure that its website is fully and clearly up to date on internal and community news, and that its newsletter is packed full of interesting content. A list or page dedicated to outlining what the CLC thinks about certain topics, as well as adopting an 'editorial calendar' approach to content development, would also help to improve awareness of the CLC's policies, views and activities.
- **Introduce a biannual update**  
To keep the regulated community more up-to-date with developments both within the CLC and in the arenas where the CLC operates, the CLC could consider introducing a special biannual update. This would condense the CLC's recent work into conclusive and understandable chunks.
- **Reintroduce the forum**  
Though the forum was shut down after unpleasant personal attacks on individual members, the online survey demonstrated that many in the regulated community valued it. Reinstating the forum would be recommended, but with the necessary refinements to how it is administered and moderated.

#### iv. Enhance the public profile of the CLC

A number of respondents referred to the public's ignorance of the CLC and the CLC's low profile within the legal community; the lack of public commentary was accordingly identified as a symptom or a cause. We therefore recommended that the CLC:

- **Ramp up press engagement and PR profile**

The CLC should be commenting on both positive and negative conveyancing news more promptly and more often. One phone discussion respondent, for example, asserted that the CLC should be commenting on disciplinary breaches. The execution of more proactive media relations would enhance public awareness of the CLC's presence, improve interaction with the press, and reinforce the idea that CLC standards are high.

The CLC should also send journalists updates of its work and meet face-to-face with relevant journalists no less than twice per year.

- **Commission a thought leadership project / report on eminent issue**

In commissioning a report into a salient topic for conveyancers – such as lender panels or the switching of marketplace – the CLC could collect and condense the views of the legal community into a significant piece of insight designed to provoke and engage debate amongst the media and stakeholders alike.

Such a report would not have to present strident conclusions attributed to the CLC; rather, it could present the CLC as taking a leading position on difficult issues for the sector, serve as PR content, and provide a platform for wider speaking and dialogue opportunities.

- **Consider an advocacy-style campaign on an important issue**

Potentially on a similar topic to the one covered in the thought leadership piece, an advocacy campaign would place the CLC at the forefront of conveyancing dialogue and issues – such as improving the situation for lawyers switching marketplace. The campaign could be conducted through press interviews, panel discussions, white paper development and targeted lobbying.

## Appendix A: Phone interview questions

### CLC PERCEPTIONS AUDIT

#### QUESTIONNAIRE / DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

*At the outset, we will verify the contact's name and position / job title, and confirm that they are happy to talk openly and that they feel they know enough about the CLC to make a useful contribution to the study. We will also assure them that their comments will be unattributed.*

#### Section I: Awareness and understanding of the role of the CLC

- 1 On a scale of 1 - 5, with 5 being very familiar and regular dealings, and 1 being not at all and virtually no contact, could you say how well you feel you know the CLC?
- 2 Do you feel that this level of engagement is about right, or would you like to be in more regular contact with the CLC, or less?
- 3 Are you able to say whether you think this applies generally across your own organisation? Are there others who you think have more contact with the CLC, or are more aware of it? (If so, who and why?)
- 4 Can you tell me in your own words what you understand to be the role of the CLC?
- 5 I'd like to expand on your understanding of their role a little further. I am going to read out a number of statements about the CLC and for each one I'd like you to say whether you agree or disagree with the statement:

Statement	Agree / Disagree
The CLC regulates licensed conveyancers	
The CLC sets the standards of conduct and discipline for licensed conveyancers	
The CLC licenses individuals qualified to practise conveyancing	
The CLC licenses recognised firms and ABSs to practise conveyancing	
The CLC is overseen by the Law Society	
The CLC regulates probate work	
The CLC is the representative body for licensed conveyancers	
The CLC investigates allegations of misconduct	
The CLC sets education and training standards for entry into the profession	
The CLC provides education and training for the profession	

Statement	Agree / Disagree
Any solicitor can elect to be regulated by the CLC	
Any practice or ABS can elect to be regulated by the CLC	
The CLC puts the needs of the consumer first	
The CLC promotes competition in the legal profession	

- 6 Thank you. Now, thinking about the roles and responsibilities of the CLC as you see them, do you think there are areas of overlap with your own responsibilities and functions? (If yes, explore which areas and why there is a perceived overlap.)
- 7 (If yes to question 6) Do you see this as a problem or an opportunity? Why?

### Section 2: The CLC as a regulator

- 8 I would now like to ask you a few questions about how well you think the CLC performs its functions. One of the most important functions of a regulatory body is setting standards for the profession it regulates. Do you think the CLC sets high enough standards for its regulated community? (If not, what is wrong with current standards? What would they like to see changed?)
- 9 How would you sum up the CLC's reputation?
- 10 Would you say the CLC is trusted?
- 11 Which three words would you use to describe the CLC?
- 12 Are there any areas where you think the CLC could do better?

### Section 3: The CLC as a communicator

- 13 I would now like to ask a few questions about the CLC's communications. Can you remember the last time you heard from, or met with, the CLC, initiated by them? What was it about?
- 14 And when was the last time you initiated contact with the CLC? What did it concern?
- 15 Are you happy with the amount of communication between you and the CLC, or would you like it to be more, or less?
- 16 What form of communication do you think works best? And at what level? (Prompt with options if necessary: formal and informal meetings; social events; technical events and seminars; email updates; update phone calls; exchange of literature; etc.)
- 17 Are there any specific areas where you think you could or should be working more closely with the CLC?

- 18 Would you say you are familiar with the CLC’s stance on the key issues affecting regulation of the legal community today?

As a follow up, I am going to read out a few statements and I want you to say whether you think this IS, or IS NOT, truly representative of the CLC’s views.

Statement	True / False representation
The CLC supports greater competition in the legal profession and believes that this is best served by a variety of regulators	
The CLC believes that the number of regulatory bodies in the legal community confuses consumers and stifles innovation	
The CLC believes that it is best placed to provide education and training for its licensed community	
The CLC wishes to secure the right to regulate other lawyers	
The CLC believes that a single regulator would simplify the provision of legal services	
The CLC would like to eradicate the double regulation and overlap that impedes free functioning of the market	
The CLC believes in a central compensation fund to enhance consumer protection	
The CLC believes that regulatory and representative functions can be performed under one roof without compromising objectivity	

- 19 Overall, do you feel that the CLC is effective at getting its messages across?
- 20 How do you think it compares to other bodies in the legal community in this regard?

#### Section 4: General perceptions of the CLC

- 21 Finally, I’d like to ask a few broader questions about your perceptions of the CLC. How favourably does the CLC compare to the other organisations in the legal community?
- 22 If the CLC was a make of car, which make would it be? (And why?)
- 23 If you could give the CLC one piece of advice, what would it be?
- 24 And finally, what three words do you think the CLC would use to describe your organisation?

*End by thanking them for their time and reminding them that any comments they made during the conversation will not be attributable.*

## SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC AUDIENCES

### For representative body of licensed conveyancers (The Society of Licensed Conveyancers, SLC)

After question 4, add:

- 4a Do you think the boundaries are blurred between the CLC and the SLC?
- 4b Are there any functions the CLC performs that you feel should be the preserve of the SLC? (Which ones? Why?)
- 4c Do you think the current situation is confusing for your members?

After question 17, add:

17a Do you think your members would like to see more cooperation between the two organisations?

### For other representative bodies (i.e., The Law Society, CILEx)

After question 6, add:

6a I'd like to probe your thoughts in particular on the role of lenders in property transactions and how they have progressively passed the risk on to the conveyancer. Is this an area where you feel you might have a common cause with the CLC?

Is it one you would wish to explore?

After question 9, add:

- 9a Are you conscious of any issues arising from confusion between regulatory bodies and representative bodies in the legal community?
- 9b Would you like to see more co-operation, or less? In which areas specifically?

### For property specialists (RICS / NAEA)

After question 20, insert a new section: **The CLC and property transactions**

- 20a I'd now like to ask a few questions about property transactions and the role of licensed conveyancers. Do you think your members are aware of licensed conveyancers and their services?
- 20b Do you think your members trust licensed conveyancers as much as they do solicitors regulated by the SRA?
- 20c Are you aware of any issues arising from the role of licensed conveyancers and how they work with other professionals in the property sector?
- 20d Do you feel the CLC does a useful job in promoting the role and value of licensed conveyancers to your members, or could it do more?
- 20e What areas of overlap do you think there are between the CLC and [name of organisation]? (If any stated, explore whether they feel there is potential for working together and how?)

20f Are there any areas of property transactions where you feel the consumer is still not fully protected?

(If any) What do you think needs to be done to improve this and ensure that the risk is managed appropriately?

**For lender bodies (CML and BSA)**

After question 3, add:

3a How well do you think your members understand the role of the CLC?

(I appreciate it is difficult to answer on behalf of others, especially when their individual views may differ widely, but are you aware of any general trends, such as:

- Are they aware of the CLC?
- Do they understand its role?
- Do they think it performs an important function?
- Are they confused by the jungle of bodies in the legal community?)

3b Would you like the CLC to be more proactive in outlining its role?

**For the Ministry of Justice**

Delete questions 6 and 7.

Delete question 25.

After question 9, add:

9a Are there any areas of its responsibilities where you think the CLC has been particularly effective? (Possibly prompt with: setting high standards; following up cases of misconduct / discipline; driving innovation; encouraging competition.)

9b Are there any areas where you think the CLC has not been particularly effective, or has failed to perform?

*Express thanks for time and contribution to this perceptions audit.*

*As stated at the start of this discussion, assure respondent that comments will not be attributed.*

## Appendix B: Online survey questions

### CLC PERCEPTIONS AUDIT

#### ONLINE SURVEY FOR THE REGULATED COMMUNITY

Before completing this survey, please tell us a little about yourself:

1 Are you a: Registered CLC student  
Employed licensed conveyancer  
Licensed conveyancer manager of a CLC-regulated body  
Non-licensed conveyancer manager of a CLC-regulated body

2 Is your primary activity:  
Conveyancing  
Probate  
Both conveyancing and probate  
Management  
Other (please state)

3 Age

4 Sex

#### Section I: Regulation by the CLC

5 How long have you been regulated by the CLC? Less than 1 year  
1-3 years  
3-10 years  
Over 10 years

6 How user-friendly do you find the Annual Licence Renewal process?  
(1-5 ranking, 1 – very hard to 5 – very easy)

7 How user-friendly do you find the Annual Regulatory Return process?  
(1-5 ranking, 1 – very hard to 5 – very easy)

8 Would it be of benefit to you to do both the Annual Licence Renewal and Annual Regulatory Return at the same time?  
(yes/no, giving reasons)

9 How often do you visit the CLC website? Approximately once a week  
Approximately once a fortnight  
Approximately once a month  
Less than once a month  
Never

10 What do you use the website for? Check the Code and Guidance  
Advertise job opportunities  
Look for a new job  
Look for CP training  
Respond to CLC consultations  
Submit license applications etc.

Submit coursework (students only)  
Other (please state)

- 11 How would you rate the CLC's website in regard to:
- Technical content
  - Breadth of issues and topics covered
  - Practical value
- (1-5 ranking by each, 1 – very poor to 5 – very good)
- 12 How would you rate the CLC's newsletters in regard to:
- Technical content
  - Frequency of contact
  - Breadth of issues and topics covered
  - Practical value
- (1-5 ranking by each, 1 – very poor to 5 – very good)
- 13 How helpful and approachable do you find the CLC staff?  
(1-5 ranking, 1 – very unapproachable to 5 – very approachable)
- 14 Thinking about the last time you had direct contact (email, phone, or in person) with CLC staff, how satisfied were you with the information or support that you received?  
(1-5 ranking, 1 – very unsatisfied to 5 – very satisfied, plus option to say 'not had direct contact')
- 15 Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience of contact with the CLC?  
(Space for written answers)
- 16 Overall, do you feel the CLC keeps you up to date with what's expected of you as a regulated individual or entity?  
(1-5 ranking, 1 – very badly to 5 – very well)
- 17 Do you feel that the standards set by the CLC achieve their aim of promoting innovation and growth of legal business while protecting the consumer? (Please give reasons for your answer)  
(1-5 ranking, 1 – don't achieve the aim at all to 5 – fully achieve the aim)
- 18 Overall, do you feel that being regulated by the CLC is of benefit to you? (Please give up to three reasons for your answer)  
(1-5 ranking, 1 – no benefit at all to 5 – extremely beneficial)
- 19a Do you have previous experience of regulation by another body (e.g. SRA)?  
(yes/no)
- 19b If yes, please state which:       SRA  
  CILEx  
  Other (please specify)
- 19c How well does the CLC meet your expectations in comparison to the other regulator?  
(1-5 ranking, 1 – far worse to 5 – much better)
- 20a Do you intend to renew your CLC licence?  
(yes/no)

20b If no, please give reasons

21 Have you any additional comments to make on the points raised so far before we move on to Section 2?  
(Space for written answers)

**Section 2: The Role of the CLC**

22 The following table contains a list of the CLC’s functions. Please state for each whether you are aware of the function and, if so, how well you feel the CLC performs it:

Function	Aware (y/n)	Very poor	Poor	Ave.	Good	Very good	Don't know
Regulation of individual licensed conveyancers							
Regulation of probate practitioners							
Regulation of ABSs and recognised bodies							
Setting standards for training and education							
Setting standards for professional practice							
Issuing licences to practise							
Providing practical guidance to the regulated community							
Providing advice to consumers							
Complaint handling and monitoring compliance							
Monitoring and shaping policy							

23 Do you feel that the CLC understands your business and the challenges you face?  
(1-5 ranking, 1 – doesn't understand it at all to 5 – understands it extremely well)

24 Do you feel that the CLC does enough to support you in achieving compliance with regulation?  
(1-5 ranking, 1 – provides no support to 5 – provides exemplary support)

25 What could the CLC do to support you better?  
(Space for written answers)

**Section 3: The CLC as an effective regulator**

26 The following table is a list of the CLC’s strategic themes and policies. For each, please state whether you are aware of the theme/policy and, if so, how effective you think the CLC is in delivering it:

Policy / Strategic theme	Aware (y/n)	Very poor	Poor	Ave.	Good	Very good	Don’t know
Promoting the setting up of a central compensation fund							
Promoting the introduction of an industry-wide PII approach							
Developing a formal regulatory response to persistent low level non-compliance							
Developing a more flexible, modular approach to qualification as a licensed conveyancer							
Increasing and improving consumer engagement							
Identifying new areas of property work where regulation can be improved							
Campaigning for a review of how banks manage legal panels							
Moving away from direct provision of education and training to focus on setting standards and accreditation of third party providers							

27a The CLC recently submitted a response to the MoJ’s review of the regulation of legal services. Were you aware of this response?  
(yes/no)

27b If you answered yes to 27a, did you agree with the CLC’s position?  
(1-5 ranking, 1 – didn’t agree at all to 5 – agreed fully)

27c If you answered no to 27a, do you recall seeing commentary by the CLC in the press?

28 Do you think the CLC is influential in the development of the legal sector?  
(yes/no)

29 Have you any additional comments to make before moving on to the final section?  
(Space for written answers)

**Section 4: General perceptions of the CLC**

30 How well do you think each of the following applies to the CLC?

Description	Does not apply at all	Does not apply much	Neutral	Applies a little	Very applicable
Professional					
Respected					
Accountable					
Acts with integrity					
Effective					
Helpful					
Reliable					
Good communicator					
Accessible					
Expert					
Open					
Transparent					
Straightforward					
Influential					

31 Which three words would you choose to describe the CLC?  
(Space for written answers)

32 Overall, do you think that regulation by the CLC provides value for money?  
(yes/no)

33 Have you any additional comments to make before concluding the survey?  
(Space for written answers)

That completes the survey. Thank you for your time. Your answers will help us to shape the future of regulation and the role we provide.