

Iliffe Media

Independent Press Standards Organisation Annual Report

Period covered: October-December 2017

Introduction

Iliffe Media is a privately-owned publisher of newspapers and magazines covering areas of Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

Two of the titles – the Cambridge Independent and the Bishop’s Stortford Independent – were launched by the firm while the remaining newspaper titles were purchased from Johnston Press.

The former JP titles now under Iliffe ownership are: Fenland Citizen, Lynn News Tuesday, Lynn News Friday, Lincs Free Press, Spalding Guardian, Grantham Journal, Bourne Local, Rutland Times, Rutland and Stamford Mercury (three editions), Bury Free Press (four editions), Newmarket Journal, Haverhill Echo, Suffolk Free Press and Diss Express.

Two magazines have also been added to the portfolio: Velvet, a lifestyle magazine, and the business focussed IQ magazine.

The majority of the titles also publish to branded websites.

The firm employs 53 journalists as well as some freelance support.

Iliffe Media has also acquired KM Media Group. As it operates as a separate publishing unit, it is filing its own annual report.

Responsible person

The responsible person is editorial director Paul Brackley. His contact details are

████████████████████ or ████████████████████

Editorial standards

We follow the Society of Editors’ Code of Practice.

All staff are issued with the guidelines (and updates) and are expected to follow them and, if in doubt, ask either the editor or another senior member of staff for advice.

Editors can, where they feel it is necessary, seek legal advice before publication from the News Media Association’s legal advice service.

All staff are also aware of the availability of IPSO’s pre-publication advice service and the useful guidelines which are available online.

Training

The majority of our reporters have been on an NCTJ-accredited course or have had extensive careers in newspapers and media.

The Bury Free Press is registered as a shorthand centre, helping five of our new trainee journalists reach the standard required to pass the 100wpm Teeline exam. The newspaper's office is also a training hub for our trainee journalists, offering practical sessions to help them with their jobs, their logbooks and, eventually, to pass the NQJ.

Complaints process

We make it as easy as possible for readers to contact us with concerns by including the editor's name and contact details in each paper. They are also available on our websites. We also include details of how to contact IPSO.

Our procedure for dealing with complaints is as follows:

1. Acknowledge the complaint and explain how it will be investigated
2. Complaint is passed to an editor to investigate
3. Complainant is made aware of the outcome
4. If necessary a correction, clarification, new story or right of reply is agreed with complainant
5. The correction, clarification, new story or right of reply will appear in the next issue
6. The correction, clarification, new story or right of reply where possible will be published in a position of equal (or better) prominence to the original article
7. The complaint and outcome is logged
8. A complainant can appeal to the editorial director/managing director if not satisfied with the offered remedy. They will be kept informed of the outcome.
9. Any issues regarding staff training/education are examined and actioned

We also make it clear that if a complaint is not settled within 28 days it will be referred to IPSO.

Compliance

There have been no complaints about Iliffe titles to IPSO during the statement period. However, there was one historic complaint which dates back to Johnston Press ownership of the title.

The complaint from [REDACTED] was against Spalding Today, which is a website for the Lincs Free Press and Spalding Guardian, after a picture of him was published as part of a court story.

The picture had been sent to the title by [REDACTED] as part of a promotional story for the firm. [REDACTED] head and shoulders were cropped from the picture and published with the court case article involving [REDACTED].

He pointed out that the image had been issued for use only with the original story (this was backed up by looking at the original correspondence) and we immediately took the picture down from the website.

It was after this that IPSO became involved, having been contacted by [REDACTED] They encouraged us to work out a solution together and, I believe, we paid him (he is involved with [REDACTED]) £100 for one-off usage of the picture (which was only online for a few days).

It has made us think carefully about how we use pictures given to us or taken by us, so was a valuable lesson. We now clearly indicate any usage restrictions demanded by the copyright holder.