

IPSO annual report from Wyvex Media Limited, Oban.  
1 January-31 December 2017

**TITLES PUBLISHED**

The Oban Times	print/digital edition	weekly (Thur)	10,527
The Campbeltown Courier	print/digital edition	weekly (Fri)	2,853
The Argyllshire Advertiser	print/digital edition	weekly (Fri)	2,175
The Arran Banner	print/digital edition	weekly (Fri)	2,919
Scottish Field/ SF Leopard	print/digital edition	monthly	17,426
Fish Farmer	print/digital edition	monthly	1,281
SF Edinburgh	Print edition (free)	quarterly	22,770
Cask & Still	Print edition (free)	biannual	6,907
Holiday Arran	Print edition (free)	annual	17,500
Holiday West Highland	Print edition (free)	5 issues a year	33,250
West Coast Review	Print edition (free)	11 issues a year	10,305
Mull and Iona Life	Print edition (free)	4 issues a year	1,488
Lochaber Life	Print edition (free)	11 issues a year	11,799
Summer on Islay (new)	Print edition (free)	1 issue 2017	13,000

**RESPONSIBLE PERSONS**

Susan Windram, group editor, The Oban Times, Argyllshire Advertiser, Campbeltown Courier and Arran Banner, plus free magazines Holiday Arran, Holiday West Highland, West Coast Review, Mull and Iona Life, Lochaber Life and a new product, Summer on Islay.

Richard Bath, Editor, Scottish Field incorporating SF Leopard, Fish Farmer, plus free magazines SF Edinburgh and Cask & Still.

**OVERVIEW**

Wyvex Media is a privately-owned company. It produces The Oban Times, which is the regional title for the West Highlands and covers one of the largest geographical spread of any local weekly newspaper in Scotland, serving an area which stretches from the Kintyre peninsula in the south to Fort William and Mallaig in the north. Sister titles, The Campbeltown Courier and The Argyllshire Advertiser circulate in the historically important but small Argyllshire towns of Campbeltown and Lochgilphead, and surrounding areas, while The Arran Banner serves the island off the west coast of Scotland that bears its name.

All titles have a dedicated website, Facebook pages and Twitter feeds.

Wyvex Media Ltd also publishes Scottish Field magazine which has a proud heritage spanning 110 years, delivering editorial on a variety of key subjects including country news, interiors, gardens, food and drink, property, antiques, travel, fashion, whisky and heritage. Wyvex Media Ltd acquired Leopard magazine in the summer and the October issue of SF contained the first edition of Leopard bound in at the back of the magazine for all existing Leopard subscribers as well as SF subscribers who live in

Aberdeen postcodes. Scottish Field has its own website (with a new website about to be launched in March), Facebook page and Twitter feed.

The Scottish Field team also produces two free magazines - SF Edinburgh, a what's on-style magazine which is distributed free to homes within designated areas of Edinburgh, and Cask & Still, a free drinks magazine which is distributed to relevant businesses.

Added to this the company also produces Fish Farmer magazine, which has been serving the aquaculture industry for over 30 years and has a worldwide distribution and its own website.

In 2017 the company took the difficult decision to close Scots Heritage magazine.

#### **EDITORIAL STANDARDS**

Maintaining high editorial standards is at the core of Wyvex Media's business. All our journalists are issued with the Editors' Code of Practice when they join and their contracts make it clear that they are expected to act within its guidelines.

Following the publication of the new version of the Editor's Code on 1 January 2018, a link to the IPSO website plus a PDF copy of the code was distributed to all editorial staff with details of the changes. The codebook was also uploaded to the company's intranet site, and any new staff are made aware of the Code at their induction, given a hard copy and directed to the IPSO website.

#### **VERIFICATION OF STORIES**

Editorial staff will always endeavour to follow best practice and do their utmost to verify the stories that are put forward for publication. Our aim is to ensure fair, balanced and accurate reporting. Newspaper articles involving possible contentious issues are reviewed by the group editor Susan Windram who would seek pre-publication/ code compliance advice from IPSO and/or the company's lawyer where necessary.

Articles for all magazines are the responsibility of editor Richard Bath, who follows the same guidelines and would seek pre-publication/ code compliance advice from IPSO and/or the company's lawyer where necessary.

#### **COMPLIANCE WITH THE EDITOR'S CODE**

We will comply with the findings of IPSO and take the suggested remedial action.

#### **COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE**

Wyvex Media seeks to resolve editorial complaints as quickly and as amicably as possible where a mistake has been discovered. However, we will strongly defend our journalism when we believe that there has been no breach of the Code.

Readers who wish to bring a factual error to our attention are directed to the relevant editors/senior reporters, who will arrange a prompt correction of any accepted inaccuracies. In the majority of cases corrections, clarifications and/or apologies will appear on the same page as the original article. If the story appeared online, so will the corrections, clarifications and/or apology.

All complaints will be handled in the first instance by the title's editor/deputy editor or senior reporter. Initial contact with the complainant must be made within 24 hours. Any investigation will be completed within seven days where possible. Where the disputed article also appears online, it will be removed immediately until the investigation has been completed.

All formal complaints to the group editor/magazine editor are recorded on an IPSO complaint sheet which is available to all relevant staff on our intranet. Entries should include the nature of the dispute, how the dispute was handled and any agreed remedy. This helps ensure all complaints are dealt with in a professional and timely manner and makes compiling the annual compliance report easier.

Every effort will be made to resolve complaints amicably, but if the dispute looks like it cannot be resolved, the group/magazine editor must be informed as soon as possible so the matter can be discussed.

After initial contact with the relevant deputy editor/senior reporter, further official correspondence with the aggrieved party will come from the group/magazine editor so the complainer is aware the matter has been escalated.

If the group/magazine editor is satisfied the complaint has been handled properly but there is no resolution, complainants will be given details of how to contact IPSO.

All Wyvex Media Ltd titles have a standard complaints procedure which is published on the letters pages of our titles and websites along with the IPSO logo. It explains how we will attempt to resolve legitimate complaints and carries details of Wyvex Media's IPSO membership together with IPSO contact information.

All legal complaints (complaints that come via a lawyer's letter or a demand for financial remedy and refer to a cause of action) are handled by the company's lawyers.

As specified above, all formal complaints received by The Oban Times, her sister titles and our magazines are recorded in a rolling report by the group/magazine editors. Although complaints received on an informal basis are generally noted, given the trivial nature of many issues and the disparate way these complaints are received and dealt with (orally, by telephone, letter or email), it would be disproportionate for these types of complaints to be formally assessed in terms of the Code.

The most important factor is that all complaints are addressed and, where possible, resolved quickly. The complaints report is available to all editorial staff and is submitted for quarterly board meetings.

We state unequivocally that we will abide by the findings of IPSO and the remedial action it deems necessary.

In line with IPSO's request, we ensure a complete copy of the original articles are archived and kept for four months before any substantive changes are made to an online article or other material in response to a complaint. PDFs of the published pages are retained and as the newspapers have recently switched to a Wordpress content management system, this now means that original copy by the reporter and any changes made by sub-editors are all archived.

All staff responsible for such changes are aware of these responsibilities. Staff are notified of any changes to procedures or IPSO obligations and updates via our intranet, and if appropriate in our employee handbook.

#### **INTERNAL GUIDES**

All journalists are provided with access to the Editors' Code of Practice, which they receive when they join the department, including subsequent updates, and are given details of accessing the IPSO website. We would also circulate IPSO rulings among staff, discussing and determining the implications. Staff have access to the house style guide and a copy of Scots Law for Journalists (8th edition). Every employee also has a copy of the Employee Handbook, which is updated at least annually.

#### **STAFF TRAINING**

Newspaper journalists receive any relevant updates and guidance about the implications of regulatory changes, particularly in relation to the Editors' Code of Practice and industry best practice. All editorial staff at The Oban Times and its sister titles attend legal training refreshers, usually organised every two years. The sessions include discussions as well as presentations and are updated regularly to reflect any changes in the law, together with relevant cases. The course covers IPSO, including how it works, the Code itself, highlighting any recent adjudications of note. The most recent law refresher took place in February 2016, all editorial staff on our newspapers attended the course which was organised through the NUJ.

In 2017 the newspaper journalists attended subbing training, digital training to make the most of our new websites and improve our online reporting, and social media training, which includes the social media guidance from IPSO.

#### **ADVERSE ADJUDICATIONS**

There have been no adverse adjudications against any Wyvex Media titles.

**IPSO COMPLAINT SHEET**

Date of complaint	Newspaper in which article appeared	Complainers details	Summary of complaint; code provision - eg privacy; date article published, what it was about and why person is unhappy. Was story published on web?	Reporter/ sub editor	Is this first contact with complainer? Have they contacted IPSO? What remedy offered?
06/03/2017	Lochaber Times	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] got in touch to share her disappointment with lack of coverage about the Scottish Schoolboy & Junior Boxing Championships. Letter came to Oban office and SW contacted the team in Fort William to find out the situation. The report sent in was 900 words long and we had eight other sports stories to fit into the same page, so because we had splashed on the boxing club the week before, this follow-up report was subbed for the paper, but a full report and picture had gone online.	Ellie/Martin	SW emailed [REDACTED] and explained the situation and offered to work with the club to try to do more to do more to support and encourage the club given our restrictions of space etc. Have yet to hear back from her.
21/03/2017	Oban Times	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] was upset about a short court report in which [REDACTED], a convicted sex offender was admonished for failing to make a regular meeting with police. [REDACTED] complained about the headline and the need for reporting the case at all. The story was not online.	Louise/ Martin	This was the first time the story appeared in the paper and the first contact with the complainer. The nib was a straightforward report from the court and was factual and correct. The editor wrote directly to [REDACTED]. There has been no reply to this.
28/03/2017	Oban Times	IPSO/[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	IPSO emailed to say they had received a complaint from [REDACTED] about an article published on 16.3.17 headlined 'pensioner says his toenails are more important than Christmas'. The complaint was about the headline being inaccurate.	Louise/ Martin	This is the first contact with the complainer and the first contact with IPSO. We contacted [REDACTED] directly and agreed to print an apology on the same page as the story originally ran.

14/04/2017	Oban Times		<p>[REDACTED] emailed to complain about our front page stories about a father who had gained information from an FOI that 2 councillors, who had access to sensitive information about children, did not have PVG disclosure. The councillors claim that paperwork was missing and the council said one did not return the information. we did not name the councillors. [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] complaint was that we should have named them and carried a comment from one specific councillor. He wanted me to carry an apology to the councillor for not doing so. My view was that it was that the council was mainly at fault and not individual councillors, and for that reason I felt it was not right to name them, particularly as the council elections are coming up and regardless of what a statement said, the story could have had a negative effect on someone's campaign. However, the article did make it clear that we had spoken to the councillors and we stated their position and the situation they found themselves in. [REDACTED] did not agree with my reply and threatened to go to IPSO which I said he was within his rights to do. The councillors concerned did not contact me about the article.</p> <p>[REDACTED]  [REDACTED]  [REDACTED]</p>	Louise	<p>This was the first contact with [REDACTED]. He threatened to contact IPSO. Editor contacted IPSO for advice after receiving second email to check whether complainer had valid complaint, as she felt he had not. Editor wrote back to [REDACTED] explaining why the paper felt it had no case to answer. We never heard back from him.</p>
14/04/2017	Campbeltown Couier		<p>[REDACTED] phoned Mark Davey and Susan Windram to complain that the charge in a court nib was not the correct charge as it had been amended by the procurator fiscal. [REDACTED] also left derogatory comments on the Courier's Facebook and threatened legal action</p>	Mark	<p>Following a number of discussions with [REDACTED] we agreed the wording for an apology and correction in the [REDACTED] paper.</p>

24/04/2017	Oban Times		Letter came from [REDACTED] on behalf of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] complained that an article about a [REDACTED] meeting with [REDACTED] had been sensationalised, unbalanced and that people had been misquoted. He was not the person whom he inferred had been misquoted. There was no complaint from [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] made no comment [REDACTED] other than sending in the letter.	Louise	This was the first contact with the complainant, albeit second hand. After investigation the editor found no errors in our reporting of the meeting. The editor emailed [REDACTED] addressing the complaints and said that she would be happy to talk to [REDACTED] directly should he wish to do so but saw no reason to publish an apology given the article was fair and balanced. No reply was forthcoming.
04/05/2017	Oban Times		[REDACTED] complained about our publication of a court case of a man found guilty of online sex offences. She did not believe we should have named him or used a photograph.	Sandy/Louise	This was the first contact with the complainant, I wrote back to the lady explaining the situation. She was happy with this.
26/06/2017	Oban Times		The company's PR called me saying there was one or two inaccuracies in a story we ran covering a public meeting into community concerns about the company's use of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Louise	The points raised were direct quotes from people at the meeting, and after investigation I found that while there were no errors in our story. I offered [REDACTED] the right of reply on our letters page which they took up. We also sent a reporter to do a [REDACTED] feature [REDACTED].
07/07/2017	Oban Times	[REDACTED]	We ran a letter from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] about concerns she had over upgrades to her home and that when she tried to call a designated person at [REDACTED] her call was not addressed. Her concerns were mainly over [REDACTED] The letter was not long after the Grenfell tragedy.	[REDACTED]	The editor spoke to the letter writer at length, who was very clear and articulate, and judged she had legitimate concerns. She firmly stood by what she wrote. She had kept details of dates and times she had tried to contact [REDACTED], with no response, even two weeks after the London tragedy. The editor wrote back to [REDACTED] with a detailed letter on all points, offering them a letter of reply and an article to allow them to state their policy on such matters. [REDACTED] refused the offer and continued to threaten legal action to pull advertising and to contact IPSO. As I and our lawyer believed we had no case to answer, we stood our ground. In the end, we compromised and I agreed to run a short statement on the letters page which satisfied [REDACTED].

27/07/2017	Oban Times		[REDACTED] complained about an article where a local business had questioned the organisation's use of public funding spent on a video campaign.	Louise	The original article had a fairly lengthy response from [REDACTED], but board members were unhappy, in part due to an ongoing dispute with the main person quoted, which we were unaware of. After lengthy discussions a right of reply was published in the following week's paper with an apology which resolved the matter.
07/07/2017	Oban Times	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] was upset about a straightforward planning story we ran about him applying to create [REDACTED]. There were no inaccuracies in the story.	Sandy	[REDACTED] was upset because no-one had called him and because he felt the application was sensitive given personal politics on the island. The editor phoned him to discuss the matter and we agreed he would submit a letter for our letters page. He did this and was happy with the remedy
19/09/2017	Oban Times	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] complained that our reporter had been harrassing him on the phone for a quote on a story we had been following up on.	Sandy	The editor spoke to the gentleman in question. Our report followed an article in a daily paper and the man had been receiving negative feedback from his neighbours about this, and was feeling ultra sensitive. I was happy with the conduct of our senior reporter who dealt with this and after the editor contacted him, the gentleman decided there was no further case to answer.
23/11/2017	Oban Times	[REDACTED]	The company complained about a story we ran about a probationary order served on the company claiming the information we used had been wrong.	Sandy	The original article had stated that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The problem was in part due to wrong information from the Health and Safety Executive, and despite the reporter phoning the company and emailing asking if this was the case, they had not addressed the question but given a general statement. However, the onus is on us getting it right, so we ran an apology and statement from the company on the same page as the original article the following week, resolving the issue to the firm's satisfaction.

