



Baylis Media Ltd Annual statement to IPSO January 1-December 31, 2018

Introduction (The regulated entity):

**Baylis Media Ltd
Newspaper House
48 Bell Street
Maidenhead
Berks SL6 1HX**

Baylis Media Ltd is the independent publisher of the Maidenhead Advertiser and the Slough and Windsor Express series of newspapers and their attendant websites. Unique among local newspapers, Baylis Media Ltd is owned by the Louis Baylis (Maidenhead Advertiser) Charitable Trust, which receives at least 80 per cent of the company's operating profits which it uses to support charities and good causes in the communities covered by the newspapers.

The Advertiser series has been published by the company since 1869. Ownership of the company was transferred to the Trust in 1962. The Slough and Windsor Express series, which has been published since 1812, was acquired by the company in 2008.

The company's newspapers cover East Berkshire and South Bucks, including the main towns of Maidenhead, Slough and Windsor. Both newspapers are mixed distribution, a combination of paid-for and free. The Advertiser series has a current (Jan-Dec 2018) audited circulation figure of 13,115 and readership of 28,984 and the Express an audited circulation (Jan-Dec 2018) of 36,225 and readership of 49,628.

Our websites for all titles currently collectively attract an average of 60,000-65,000 unique users a week.

The complete list of Baylis Media titles:

- Maidenhead Advertiser
- Slough & South Bucks Express
- Windsor, Ascot & Eton Express
- Informing Business – quarterly business magazine

Publisher's responsible person:

James Preston, print and digital editor
Email: jamesp@baylismedia.co.uk
Tel: 01628 678245

Our editorial standards:

Baylis Media strives for the highest editorial standards of fair, accurate and balanced reporting as laid down in our editorial policy and objectives (attached) which includes that independent verification of facts should be sought for all stories produced by our reporting staff.

All copy goes through a copy-tasting, subbing and signing off process to maintain standards and identify errors.

Baylis Media has an experienced editorial staff. We take pre-publication legal advice from an independent legal advisor but would consult IPSO pre-publication on ethical issues where we felt there might be a potential breach of the Editor's Code.

Guidance has been sought from IPSO on one occasion in 2018. This was to seek advice on the wording of a clarification in response to an accuracy complaint. The complainant was satisfied with the clarification and took no further action.

Our complaints handling process:

Baylis Media has a robust and effective complaints handling policy (again included in the attached editorial policy and objectives which is issued to all editorial staff) that seeks to resolve complaints as quickly as possible. In summary:

- We accept complaints in writing, by email or over the telephone
- If they cannot be immediately resolved complaints are escalated to senior newsdesk staff
- Records of editorial complaints which cannot be immediately resolved are kept by the editor in a complaints file which is updated to include their outcomes
- Genuine inaccuracies are corrected promptly. The resolution of other complaints depends on the nature of the complaint. It may, for example, require a simple explanation of why we did something in a particular way, a follow-up article or a letter to the editor for publication
- Information about where readers can direct complaints is carried on page two of all of our newspapers. It guides complainants to our website for a full explanation of our complaints process including how to complain to IPSO. We now include the IPSO 'kitemark' in print and online.
- A 'complaints' section features under the 'home' tab of all of our websites, providing information on who to direct complaints to and the Editor's Code of Practice.

Our training process:

As a small independent publisher we have very limited resources for training. All of Baylis Media's reporters are recruited from NCTJ pre-entry courses and then put through the NQJ training scheme, which includes assessments every six months with a senior member of the editorial team. In addition, we will hold one-to-one copy clinics with reporters to address problems as and when they arise. All reporters sitting the NQJ exams for the first time are provided with a distance learning refresher course.

Legal updates from the NMA and advice from IPSO and the code committee are shared with all editorial staff via departmental meetings supported by documentation.

All senior staff, including the newsdesk and sub-editors, are experienced and qualified newspaper or magazine journalists. We do run occasional legal updates with a newspaper law trainer but none has been held within the timeframe of this report.

All editorial staff members were made aware of the new version of the Editor's Code and Codebook at a departmental meeting in January 2018. Each member of staff was issued with an updated personal copy of the updated code, which has also been provided to new recruits throughout the year.

Journalists are expected to make themselves familiar with updates to the code and keep a copy to hand in their desks.

Our record on compliance: January 1-December 31, 2018:

Four complaints against Baylis Media's publication were made to IPSO's executive. Three were not considered to raise a breach of the Editor's Code:

- (01071-18 – Sandeep Mander v Maidenhead Advertiser) – Appeal rejected
- ([REDACTED] v Slough & South Bucks Express)
- ([REDACTED] v Slough & South Bucks Express)

One complaint was dropped before adjudication after the publication of a clarification:

- ([REDACTED] v Maidenhead Advertiser)

Transparency regarding financial relationships

The Baylis Media editorial policy makes clear that 'we do not allow advertisers to dictate editorial content' and stories about advertisers should have a legitimate news angle. Advertising features, the content of which is controlled by the customer, should be clearly labelled as such to distinguish them from editorial.

The editorial policy on paid-for editorial content (please see attached) is as follows: "In clearly defined circumstances, such as businesses to business publications or sections, Baylis Media Ltd will publish content supplied by a customer in exchange for payment. This will be treated as editorial on the clear understanding that editorial control of the content rests with Baylis Media Ltd as the publisher. While it is accepted such content will provide raised profile for the customer as a consequence of publication, to comply with the policy it must also be factually accurate and informative, providing genuine reader interest and value. As editorial control rests with the publisher, such paid-for content will be considered to be editorial for the purposes of industry regulation and have to comply with the standards of the Editor's Code. As such, there will be no requirement for it to be labelled as 'advertorial'."

Baylis Media will only accept a free experience or review tickets if there is a legitimate news angle and will always make clear to companies that the newspaper retains editorial independence. Any expectation of positive publicity in exchange for a free experience will be rejected. Baylis Media will be looking to update its editorial policy this year to give clear guidance to reporters on the acceptance and disclosure of free experiences.

Appendix:

A copy of Baylis Media Ltd's Editorial policy and objectives (updated in July 2017) is included with this report.