

HAMPSHIRE MEDIA LIMITED

Hampshire Media Ltd was formed in January 2001. The two directors, Jez Walder and Mark O' Connor had previously worked within the newspaper industry primarily with the Hampshire Chronicle group in Winchester. The aim of the owners was to give the local businesses in and around the area a choice in the market place following the sale of the Chronicle to the Newsquest group.

The company rapidly expanded and following the success of the Winchester based Mid Hants Observer the company produced a second paper the West Hants Observer in 2003. This covered the Romsey and Andover areas and meant that advertisers could now appear to over 35,000 readers each Thursday.

Age Concern Hampshire based in Winchester then came on board the following year with the company producing, selling and delivering their quarterly publication whilst receiving editorial from Age Concern.

In 2012 Hampshire Media Ltd successfully tendered for the public notice contract with councils across Hampshire. This led to our third weekly title Hampshire Independent which is distributed county wide in over 240 major outlets.

We currently produce the following publications each week:-

Mid Hants Observer covering Winchester 17,000 copies each Thursday

Hampshire Independent 15,000 print run each Friday delivered to 240 outlets countywide

The names of the publisher's responsible people are the owners Jez Walder and Mark O' Connor.

The company has always believed that a free local paper needs to reflect just positive news stories that occur directly in the areas that we deliver. Hampshire Media Ltd receives over 80 press releases each day and decide accordingly to run the most relevant time related articles. An example of this would be an event that is occurring the weekend following our publication date. This would get priority over events happening the following month.

Hampshire Media Ltd as a free newspaper relies solely on advertising revenue so editorial space can be very limited at times. The company as a rule runs a 70/30 split in favour of advertising. The aim is to be as informative as possible but not in anyway sensationalist. Local council stories informing what is happening in the area alongside charitable events are very popular. The editorial also includes advertorials which are marked as such usually alongside an advert by that customer.

Hampshire Media Ltd has a weekly meeting to discuss any issues that may have risen over that particular issue. The company is fortunate to have a small very experienced team that have over 40 years of production/editorial experience.

Hampshire Media Ltd due to the very nature of their publications has never received a complaint about the editorial content of our papers. Distribution complaints are dealt with by Lesley Tilly, this is unfortunately more of a problem with the odd misbehaving paperboy/girl usually caught not delivering the papers.

Hampshire Media Ltd has not yet sought pre-publication guidance from IPSO. However, it would do so if it needed advice on interpreting the Editors' Code of Practice or the public interest exception.

Hampshire Media Ltd do not have any editorial codes, manuals or written guidance that it provides to its staff in regards to editorial matters. The owners of the company oversee the final content that appears each week in the publication.

In conclusion, Hampshire Media Ltd have not employed journalists since the tragic death of Max Jones in 2006. The company took the decision to rely solely on press releases from reliable sources to fill the space around the more important advertising. Over the years the number of organisations wanting to get their press releases in our publications has grown enormously.