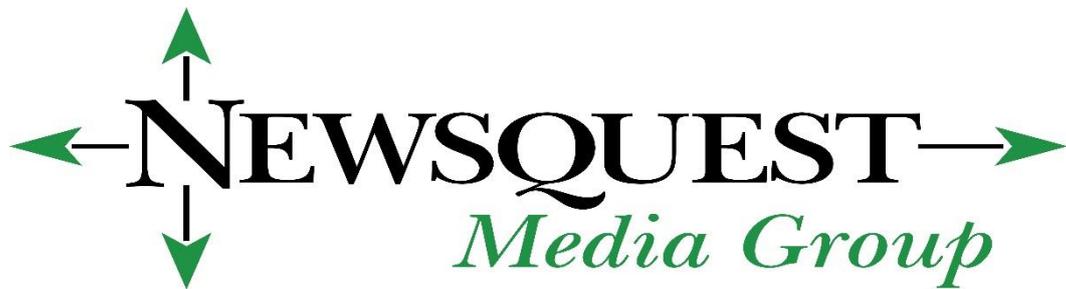


Annual Statement to the Independent Press Standards
Organisation (IPSO)

For the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020



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1. Foreword

This is the annual statement of Newsquest Media Group to the Independent Press Standards Organisation for the year 2020. It is made pursuant to clause 3.3.7 and Annex A of the Scheme Membership Agreement.

2. Overview

Newsquest Media Group Limited is one of the UK's leading news publishers, with the company now owning and distributing over 200 local news and magazine brands. Newsquest's first entity was formed in 1995 when Reed Regional Newspapers were bought by its own management. It has grown rapidly and has acquired several large regional newspapers over the years such as Westminster Press. Recent structural changes mean that Newsquest Media Group is now the principal publisher with our registered office is at Loudwater Mill in High Wycombe with an office in central London as well. Newsquest's ultimate holding company in the UK is Gannett U.K Limited, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Gannett Co. Inc, a US company listed on the New York stock exchange who have 250 daily titles in circulation.

3. Responsible Person

The Responsible Person (as defined in clause 3.3.9 of the Scheme Membership Agreement) is Simon Westrop, the Group Head of Legal and Company Secretary for Newsquest Media Group Limited.

4. Nature of the Regulated Entity

At the heart of our business, our role is to deliver the news that matters to our readers. Never has the power and relevance of the local press been as important and appreciated by our readers as it has been this past year. Despite rapid and evolving commercial and technological changes in our society, and an increase in digital consumption of news, it is clear to us that regional press is still important to the public.

We currently have 21 daily newspapers and it is our role to record and report on the lives of the people who make up the communities we serve and those of our readers. We report on the normal happenings of daily life as well as the extraordinary and everything in between. Through doing so, we strive to keep our communities, and indeed our readers, connected and never has this has been more important than over the last 12 months when distance has been one of our nation's biggest challenges.

5. Reflection on 2020

At the time of writing this annual statement, we are coming out of the coronavirus pandemic and hope to return to normality shortly. Throughout this pandemic, we, like all other businesses, have been adapting to the changes that have been facing our industry and working out how best to serve our customers. A common theme throughout the past 12 months has been the feedback from our readers which has been an overwhelmingly positive response to the availability of their local newspaper throughout this difficult period.

In each annual statement, we invite a local editor to give us a glimpse of the newspaper and the life of the community it represents. This year we have asked Julia Lancett, Managing Director, to reflect on the changes that the business has seen during the coronavirus pandemic and how we expect to move forward.

A year on from the first lockdown and the second wave hit, along with the shorter days, longer nights and the winter months looming. On an upside we now find ourselves in the midst of spring, albeit with the odd snow and hail showers typical of the UK weather, a robust vaccination programme across the country and a forecast of recovery for the nation.

Our journalists, printers, distribution network and commercial teams have re-adjusted admirably to bring trusted local and pandemic news to our communities, supporting local businesses and continuing to highlight many causes. We have experienced record levels of engagement through online audiences, attracting 45.6 million unique visitors in January across Newsquest, up 32.9% year on year and generating 260 million page views across the month. Despite the restrictions we continued to provide remarkably robust numbers of printed media, teaming up with retailers to offer free delivery to those that have been isolated. We have heard from many people how we have often been a vital connection and lifeline to the outside world.

At the forefront of our mind has been people's welfare, both physically and mentally with equal importance. The company has continued to invest in this area through additional holidays, a wellbeing portal across the business for all employees as well as expanding the number of mental health first aiders and training for managers to support staff throughout the organisation.

Most people have continued to largely work from home, however where it has not been possible, staff have continued to work from Covid secure offices and as key workers, journalists have attended court, council meetings and covered live breaking news events as they unfolded. The future workplace will undoubtedly offer more flexibility, but the consensus is that we very much look forward to being physically together again, working collectively as a thriving news team in the hub of a local office.

Over the past 12 months we have continued to realign our business, this has included launching new brands such as The National Wales and Salford City News, alongside our first ever virtual events programme. At the heart of this we pioneered Health & Social Care Awards in many regions across the UK, to recognise the incredible and outstanding work of individual care workers and organisations.

Finally as we look towards the future, Newsquest has announced a £1.5m editorial investment of 50 new digital journalism roles across the UK. Henry Faure Walker, CEO of Newsquest Media Group said, "The focus that we have placed on growing engaged local digital audiences over the last few years is paying off, with most of our sites now reaching almost 80% of their local population. This coupled with the success we are having with digital subscriptions, gives us the confidence to launch a major expansion in local journalism. This investment underlines our commitment to those towns and cities where our local brands have been the number one news provider for decades. We look forward to welcoming new talented digital journalists to join out teams in local newsrooms embedded in communities up and down the country."

6. Editorial Standards

The maintenance of high editorial standards is at the core of our business and all staff are obligated to adhere to the Editor's Code of Practice ("The Code").

For the purposes of this statement to IPSO, we attach at Appendix 2 internal guidance entitled "Principles of Ethical Newsgathering", which is specific to the work of journalists. It is compiled drawing from the experiences of our colleagues in the US. It is intended for guidance only and has no binding effect, but we use it to help journalists to follow the Editors' Code and good practice generally.

6.1 Pre-publication Guidance

Newsquest editors are generally receptive to non-binding pre-publication discussions with IPSO where a person affected by a proposed story has raised concerns. However, in practice the public use of this facility is low, at least as far as regional newspapers are concerned. We have experienced very few approaches of this kind and we are not aware of any in 2020. If, however, a story is presented that we believe may provoke confrontation or controversy we consider and refer to the rulings and guidance that IPSO publish to guide the way in which the story is written through use of precepts before publication.

6.2 Verification of Stories

We want to be trusted by our readers and we realise that trust has to be earned. Newsquest's approach to verification is discussed variously in the Newsquest guidance entitled "Principles of Ethical Newsgathering" at Appendix 2.

Many stories are generated from third party sources and there is no direct obligation in the Editors' Code requiring journalists to contact the person who is actually the subject of a story. That must always be a question of editorial judgment.

Southend
Standard

Graven Herald & Pioneer

SOUTHERN
Daily Echo

7. Training Process

Newsquest issues policies on many matters relevant to the work of its employees and the interests of its readers. Many policies are required by statute and are also published on our corporate website such as modern slavery, anti-harassment and GDPR policies. Many other policies are produced and circulated internally to departments and can include policies on competition issues, commercial practices and copyright infringement.

All trainee journalists are entered for the National Journalism Qualification from the National Council for the Training of Journalists. An external trainer prepares trainees for the qualification. Each course contains an introduction to IPSO, including case studies. In addition, the trainees undertake three practical tests in which they are asked to consider scenarios that might involve breaches of the Editors' Code.

The in-house legal team provides editorial training for Newsquest regions during the course of the year and the format will range from updates on legal matters, briefing on any new developments with IPSO and will continue to highlight the importance of compliance with the Code to ensure any new joiners are up to speed as well as providing refresher training for those who require it. Staff are supplied with physical copies of the Code and are encouraged to contact the in-house legal team if any issues or queries arise at any stage.

The majority of our recent training has been conducted electronically due to the pandemic and this training covers a range of topics from ethical conduct to cyber security and, of course, data protection. The online learning method has become particularly relied upon over the past 12 months where face to face training has not been possible. Our legal team has also delivered online training to staff through online video conferencing this past year in areas such as copyright. These recent challenges have allowed us to consider the training offering we are currently providing and to improve upon this and ensure it is accessible to all who need to access it, regardless of location. Towards the end of 2021 we hope to resume in-person training courses as soon as we are able to do so and often the company will use outside training providers to advise on specific areas as and when specific training needs are identified both by individuals, departments or by the HR team.

Dorset**ECHO**

Basildon
Canvey
Southend **Echo**

Living
MARCH 2018 COMPLIMENTARY



PRIME

The voice of the Asian community
Asian **Image**

8. Complaints Handling Process

Editors understand that IPSO's own complaints process emphasises the requirement that complainants should first try to resolve the issue with the newspaper before going to the regulator. Therefore all our local titles advertise the existence of IPSO and the Editors' Code, as enforced by IPSO, as well as our complaints process, in both the print and online editions of all titles. Readers will find a templated piece about press complaints in our printed newspapers and on our websites. For example:

Press complaints: The Whitehaven News abides by the Independent Press Standards Organisation Editors' Code of Practice. Readers who wish to make representations should write in the first instance to The Editor, The Whitehaven News 1 Dalston Road, Carlisle, Cumbria CA2 5AU or vanessa.sims@newsquest.co.uk. If not satisfied, complainants can then contact the IPSO at Gate House, 1 Farringdon Street, London, EC4M 7LG. Email inquiries@ipso.co.uk Tel 03001232220 Website: www.ipso.co.uk

Furthermore, on the footer of all of our group websites we have included the below statement:

IPSO regulated: This website and associated newspapers adhere to the Independent Press Standards Organisation's Editors' Code of Practice. If you have a complaint about the editorial content which relates to inaccuracy or intrusion, then please contact the editor [here](#). If you are dissatisfied with the response provided you can contact IPSO [here](#).

SalfordCity^{NEWS}

THE SCOTTISH
Farmer
Supporting farmers in Scotland since 1893

WALES
Farmer

THE NORTHERN
Farmer

this is
thewestcountry.co.uk

8.1 Handling a complaint

Complaints under the Editors' Code are handled personally by Editors, Group Editors (in charge of a series of titles) or Digital Content Editors (in the case of online story complaints). Subject to any relevant internal advisory policies, our complaints handlers are not restricted in their conduct of the process or the discretion they may use. Flexibility is encouraged in order to achieve a resolution. If agreement cannot be achieved or has not been achieved within 28 days, complainants are reminded of their right to take the matter to IPSO. Legal claims are referred to Newsquest Media Group Legal.

Published corrections and apologies, follow-ups, deletions or annotations to archived online stories, private letters and personal meetings are some of the various resolutions which may be offered to complainants where appropriate, however these will not be offered if the Editor believes such story is justified under the Code and by statute.

SOUTH WALES
Argus

Evening
GlasgowTimes

Bridgwater
Mercury

THE  PRESS

8.2 Recording resolutions

All of our editors are required to keep accurate logs of any complaints received and full details of the resolution of such complaints. The majority of complaints that we receive are complainants for minor inaccuracies rather than substantial or potential breaches of the Code. Our editors are encouraged to deal with complaints thoroughly and promptly as it is our position that acknowledging and dealing with inaccuracies promptly and comprehensively is the best way to maintain the relationship between us and our readers.

Any complaints which cannot be dealt with locally by editors will be referred to the legal team.

8.3 What if local resolution fails?

Anybody seeking to make a complaint against one of our publications is expected to seek resolution directly with the newspaper or magazine in the first instance and, if they do not have success through this avenue, they should then speak with IPSO directly. If IPSO is approached by a complainant in the first instance, then they will be redirected to us and we have a 28 day window in which to achieve a satisfactory resolution with the complainant outside the regulatory process.

If resolution is not achieved within this 28 day period the complainant may then ask IPSO to intervene.

Overall, the majority of the complaints that we receive from complainants are minor or without merit, however there are of course some complaints which will be more significant. Regardless of the type of complaint received, almost all of them are dealt with locally by our staff in the first instance.

9. GDPR

Across the Group we receive numerous requests from individuals requesting that published articles from our online editorial archives, which are publicly available, are permanently erased. The argument for deletion relies on the concept of “the right to be forgotten” and the vast majority of these requests directly relate to published reports of criminal convictions and the volume of such complaints eclipses the number of complaints that we receive relating to the Editor’s Code.

Often these requests will be understood as applications under Article 17 GDPR and Section 47 of the Data Protection Act 2018, which confer certain rights of erasure on data subjects. All these communications are passed to Newsquest Media Group’s Data Protection Office (“DPO”) at its dedicated email address: privacy@newsquest.co.uk. Some applicants, however, do raise arguments that the archived articles contain factually inaccurate information and that articles should be deleted from archive on this basis. The approach of the DPO in the majority of cases is to assess these archived articles and, in the few instances that it applies, any inaccuracies will be corrected and reflected in the archives under the principle of accuracy of processed data, as set out in Article 5 GDPR.

10. IPSO Adjudications

There were 27 cases investigated by IPSO in respect of Newsquest Media Group titles in 2020. This is a slight increase on the number of cases in the preceding year, though still within the usual range. Five of these complaints were resolved by mediation without finding of fault. Of the 22 cases referred for adjudication, 15 were not upheld. So seven complaints were upheld in 2020, as against two in 2019, six in 2018 and three in 2017. These were from the following titles: *The Herald*, *Oxford Mail*, *Reading Chronicle (online)*, *Oxford Mail (online)*, *the Press (York)*, *the Northern Echo* and *Central Fife Times and Adviser*.

As noted above, resolutions were mediated by IPSO in five cases. The titles where resolutions were achieved in 2020 were the *Daily Gazette*, the *Northern Echo*, the *Evening Times*, the *Glasgow Times* and *The Mail (Cumbria)*.

As noted above, resolutions were mediated by IPSO in five cases. The titles where resolutions were

Living
MAGAZINE

BUSINESSiQ
NORTH EAST

Hereford Times

Auto Exchange

IPSO Adjudications

Date	Publication	Case Details	Steps Taken in Response to Adverse Adjudication
28.02.2020	The Herald	The newspaper was found to have inaccurately reported on a coroner's report during an inquest into the death of a teenaged boy stating that he had 'known mental health issues' instead of 'no known mental health issues' which caused distress to the family of the deceased.	A full correction was offered promptly by the newspaper and subsequently published along with an apology to the family. The editor spoke with the reporter about these inaccuracies.
28.02.2020	Oxford Mail	The newspaper was found to have inaccurately reported on a coroner's report during an inquest into the death of a teenaged boy stating that he had 'known mental health issues' instead of 'no known mental health issues' which caused distress to the family of the deceased.	A full correction was offered promptly by the newspaper and subsequently published along with an apology to the family. The editor spoke with the reporter about these inaccuracies.
09.03.2020	Reading Chronicle	The complainant objected to the newspaper reported that trees were being cut down to make way for a new housing	The newspaper published a correction rectifying this inaccuracy and the reporters were spoken to about this.

		development and the suggestion that ancient trees were being cut down to facilitate the building of the homes. The complainant stated that the planning permission did not refer to any trees being cut down and instead that some woodland was being moved to clear a path. The newspaper was found to be in breach of clause 1(1).	
03.04.2020	Oxford Mail	The complainant objected to the headline in the newspaper which referred to him as a dangerous driver who had taken part in a race which was held to be inaccurate and a breach of clause 1(1).	The newspaper amended the headline and offered to publish a clarification in the story to correct the upheld misleading information. The editor discuss this matter internally with the relevant team to avoid this happening in the future.
06.04.2020	The Press (York)	The complainant objected to the headline of an article suggesting he had been convicted for a course of conduct spanning a 6 year period which was not the case. This inaccuracy was held to be a breach of clause 1(1).	The newspaper amended the online headline and offered to add a footnote to the article clarifying the situation. The editor discussed this internally with the team.
22.10.2020	Northern Echo	The reporter had inaccurately reported the comments of a barrister regarding the extent of the complainant's wife's illness which in turn was misleading and there was a breach of clause 1(1).	The newspaper published a footnote to the article online correcting the inaccuracy and the reporter was spoken with internally.
03.12.2020	Central Fife Times	Complainant's details were erroneously published in an article so that he was identifiable despite written confirmation from the original reporter that his details would not be published. Another reporter was unaware of this agreement and the personal details were published in error. The complainant ought to have been treated as a confidential source.	The newspaper published details of the adjudication in its paper. Internally the editor raised the issues regarding the erroneous publication of details with the reporter in question.

Although five of the cases mentioned above were mediated and subsequently settled, it is crucial to highlight the fact that an acceptance of a resolution is not the same as an admission of fault by the Group. In many cases, a resolution is sought due to our having sympathy for the position of the claimant in these cases and it is not to say that there has been a breach of the Code.

The purpose and the benefit of mediation is that it permits a sensible resolution of legitimate concerns of our readers outside of the remit of the Code. It allows a degree of flexibility and it is an invaluable tool that is often underutilised. In particular it is a way in which editors can alleviate concerns of those affected by the reporting of news whilst still permitting editors the ability to protect the freedom of the press and report the news.

Newsquest Media Group Limited

LANCASHIRE
Telegraph

Dunfermline Press
And West of fife Advertiser

the Leader

Appendix 1

NEWSQUEST MEDIA GROUP TITLES 2020

Advertiser (Barrow-in-Furness)

Alloa & Hillfoots Advertiser

Andover Advertiser

Ardrossan & Saltcoats Herald

Ascot News

Ashton Extra

Asian Image

Ayr Advertiser

Banbury Cake

Barnet & Potters Bar Times

Barrhead New

Barry & District News

Basildon Echo

Basingstoke Extra

Basingstoke Gazette

Bay Living

Berrow's Worcester Journal

Bexley News Shopper

Bicester Advertiser
Blackpool Lytham & St Anne's Citizen
Bolton Post
Border Counties Advertiser
Border Telegraph
Borehamwood & Elstree Times
Bournemouth Advertiser
Bracknell & Wokingham Midweek
Bracknell News
Braintree & Witham Times
Bridgwater Mercury
Bridgwater Star
Bridport and Lyme Regis News
Bromley News Shopper
Bromsgrove Advertiser
Bucks Free Press
Burnham Standard
Burnham & Highbridge Weekly News
Burnley Citizen
Bury Times
Bury Times (Friday)
Business HQ
Camborne Packet
Campaign Blackwood, Newbridge & Cross Keys
Campaign Caerphilly
Bargoed & Ystrad Mynach
Carlisle Living
Carrick Herald
Castlepoint Echo
Central Fife Times & Advertiser
Chard and Ilminster News

Chelmsford Weekly News
Cheltenham Independent
Chester-le-Street Advertiser
Chingford Guardian
Chorley & Leyland Citizen
Christchurch Advertiser
Clacton Gazette
Clydebank Post
Consett & Stanley Advertiser
Cotswold Living
Cotswold Journal
County Independent
County Times
Craven Herald & Pioneer
Crewe & Nantwich Guardian
Croydon Guardian (North)
Croydon Guardian (South)
Cumbria Life
Cumnock Chronicle
Daily Echo (Bournemouth)
Daily Gazette (Colchester)
Darlington & Stockton Times (Cleveland)
Darlington & Stockton Times (County Durham)
Darlington & Stockton Times (Richmond and Dales)
Darlington, Aycliffe & Sedgfield Advertiser
Denbighshire Free Press
Dorchester Life
Dorset Business
Dorset Echo
Dorset Society
Droitwich Spa Advertiser

Dudley News
Dumbarton & Vale of Leven Reporter
Dumfries & Galloway Life
Dunfermline Extra
Dunfermline Press
Durham Advertiser
Durham Times
Dursley Gazette
East Lothian Courier
Education Mag
Ellesmore Port & Nelson Standard
Enfield Independent
Epping Forest Guardian
Epping Forest Independent
Epsom Guardian
EssentialARB
Essex County Standard
Evening Times
Evesham Journal
Falmouth Packet
Fife & Kinross Extra
Flora Special Forest Journal
Forestry Journal
Frinton & Waldon Gazette
Gazette & Herald
Gazette & Herald (Chippenham)
Gazette & Herald (Devizes)
Gazette & Herald (Marlborough)
Gazette Gloucestershire Gazette Thornbury Edition
Gazette Yate and Sodbury Edition
Gloucester Gazette

Going Out Dorset
Gravesham News Shopper
Greenock Telegraph
Halesowen News
Halstead Gazette
Hampshire Business (Monthly)
Hampshire Chronicle (Winchester)
Hampshire Society (Southampton)
Harpenden Review Harrow Times
Harwich and Manningtree Standard
Helensburgh Advertiser
Helston Gazette
Helston Packet
Helston Penryn Packet
Hendon & Finchley Times
Herefordshire Living
Hereford Times
Hexham Courant
Ilkley Gazette
In-Cumbria Irvine Times
Isle of Wight County Press
Keep It Local
Keighley News
Knutsford Guardian
Lancashire Telegraph (Blackburn, Darwen, Hyndburn & Ribble Valley)
Lancashire Telegraph (Burnley, Pendle & Rossendale)
Lancashire Telegraph (Burnley Free)
Largs & Millport Weekly News
Ledbury Reporter
Leigh Journal
Life & Home Magazine

Limited Edition
Limited Edition Society
Living Magazines (26 county titles, north to south)
Lizard & Meneage Guide Locate
Ludlow Advertiser
Luxury Maldon Standard
Malvern Gazette
Manningtree and Harwich Standard
Marlow Free Press
Mid Cheshire Guardian
Mid Sussex Argus
Midweek Observer (Slough, Windsor, Maidenhead)
Milford Mercury
Monmouthshire Free Press (Chepstow)
Monmouthshire Living
New Forest Post
New Forest Society
News Extra Eastleigh
News Extra Southampton
News Extra Winchester
News & Star North Hants Society (Basingstoke & Andover)
North Wales Chronicle
North Wales Pioneer
North Yorkshire Advertiser
Oxford Herald (Abingdon)
Oxford Herald (Didcot)
Oxford Herald (Wallingford)
Oxford Herald (Wantage)
Oxford Mail
Oxford Times
Paisley People

Peeblesshire News
Pembrokeshire Farmer
Pembrokeshire Living
Penarth Times
Penwith Pirate
Pontypool Free Press
Poole Advertiser
Prescot Extra
Preston & Leyland Citizen
Prestwich & Whitefield Guide
Property Chronicle
Radcliffe Times
Rayleigh/Rochford Castlepoint Standard
Reading Midweek
Redditch and Alcester Advertiser
Rhyl Journal
Richmond & Twickenham Times
Romsey Advertiser
Royal Borough Observer
Royal Cornwall Show Programme
Runcorn and Widnes World
Sale & Altrincham Messenger
Salford City News
Salisbury Journal
Selby Star
Seven Days Magazine
Slough & South Bucks Observer
Slough Express Smallholder
Somerset County Gazette (Taunton)
Somerset County Gazette (West Somerset)
South Bucks

Star South Coast Argus
South Wales Argus
South Wales Golfer
South Wales Guardian
South West Farmer
Southend Echo
Southend Standard
Southern Daily Echo
St Albans Review
St Helens Star
Stourbridge Limited Edition
Stourbridge News
Stretford & Urmston Messenger
Stroud News & Journal
Surrey Comet
Sutton Guardian
Swanage & Wareham Advertiser
Swindon Advertiser
Swindon Star
Taste Cumbria
Taunton Star Telegraph & Argus
Tenbury Wells Advertiser
Tewkesbury Admag
The Argus
The Bolton News
The Cumberland News
The Gazette (Johnstone and Renfrewshire)
The Guide
The Herald
The Herald on Sunday
The Impartial Reporter

The Leader (Flintshire & Wrexham)
The Mail (Cumbria)
The National
The Northern Echo
The Partnership The Post (Blackburn)
The Post (Bolton)
The Press (York)
The Reading Chronicle
The Shuttle
The South Lakes Citizen
The Standard (Chester)
The Villager
The Weekend Leader
The Whitehaven News
Thornton Cleveleys Citizen
Three Counties Farmer
Thurrock Gazette
Times & Star Tiptree Tribune
Tivyside Advertiser
Tottenham & Wood Green Independent
Troon & Prestwick Times
Voice
Wales Farmer
Waltham Forest Guardian
Waltham Forest Independent
Wandsworth Guardian (Putney)
Wanstead & Woodford Guardian
Warrington Guardian
Warrington Midweek
Watford Free Observer
Watford Observer

Wear Valley Advertiser
West Cornwall Packet
Western Telegraph
Westmorland Gazette
Weymouth and Dorchester Advertiser
Wharfedale Observer
Whitchurch Herald
Widnes World
Wilmslow Guardian
Wilts & Glos Standard
Cotswold Wilts & Glos Standard
North Wilts
Wiltshire Living
Wiltshire Star (North)
Wiltshire Star (West)
Wiltshire Times
Wimbledon Guardian
Wimborne Life
Winsford & Middlewich Guardian
Wirral Globe
Witham & Braintree Times
Witney Gazette
Wokingham News
Woodley & Earley Chronicle
Worcester News
Wotton Gazette
York Herald
York Star

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www.itsinthevillager.co.uk
www.itsinwindsor.co.uk
www.iwcp.co.uk
www.keighleynews.co.uk
www.kidderminstershuttle.co.uk
www.kingstonguardian.co.uk
www.knutsfordguardian.co.uk
www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk
www.largsandmillportnews.com
www.leaderlive.co.uk
www.ledburyreporter.co.uk
www.leighjournal.co.uk
www.localberkshire.co.uk
www.ludlowadvertiser.co.uk
www.maldonandburnhamstandard.co.uk
www.malverngazette.co.uk
www.messengernewspapers.co.uk
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www.middlewichguardian.co.uk
www.milfordmercury.co.uk
www.newburyandthatchamchronicle.co.uk
www.newsshopper.co.uk
www.newsandstar.co.uk
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www.whitchurchherald.co.uk

www.whitehavennews.co.uk

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www.wirralglobe.co.uk

www.witneygazette.co.uk

www.worcesternews.co.uk

www.yeovilexpress.co.uk

www.yorkpress.co.uk

www.yourlocalguardian.co.uk

Newsquest Specialist Media:

Boxing News

Country Lifestyle Scotland

Engaged Investor

Family Focus Scotland

Fighting fit

Global Reinsurance Insurance Times

Pensions insight

Reward

Scottish Cycling

Scottish Gardener

Scottish Mountaineer

Scottish Review of Books

Scottish walks

The Strad

Strategic Risk

The Scottish Farmer

www.boxingnewsonline.net

www.countrylifestylescotland.co.uk

www.engagedinvestor.co.uk

www.familyfocus.scot

www.globalreinsurance.com

www.insurancetimes.co.uk

www.pensions-insight.co.uk

www.reward-guide.co.uk

www.scottishcyclingmag.co.uk

www.scottishgardener.co.uk

www.scottishhorse.co.uk

www.scottishwalks.com

www.strategic-risk.eu

www.strategic-risk-global.com

www.thescottishfarmer.co.uk

www.thestrads.com

Appendix 2



PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL NEWSGATHERING

Newsquest Media Group Guidance

For legal advice and further guidance on the application of these Principles, contact Newsquest Media Group's in-house lawyer, Simon Westrop, at:
swestrop@newsquest.co.uk
01494 755146
[REDACTED]

These guidelines are based on the guidelines on ethical newsgathering conduct issued by the Newspaper Division of Newsquest's US parent company Gannett Co., Inc. They consist of five ethical principles and their supporting objectives accompanied by recommended practices to protect the principles.

The five principles are:

- Seeking and reporting the truth in a truthful way
- Serving the public interest
- Exercising fair play
- Maintaining independence
- Acting with integrity

I. PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR NEWSROOMS

NEWSQUEST MEDIA GROUP PUBLICATIONS ARE COMMITTED TO:

Seeking and reporting the truth in a truthful way

We will dedicate ourselves to reporting the news accurately, thoroughly and in context.

We will be honest in the way we gather, report and present news.

We will be persistent in the pursuit of the whole story.

We will keep our word.

We will hold factual information in opinion columns and editorials to the same standards of accuracy as news stories.

We will seek to gain sufficient understanding of the communities, individuals and stories we cover to provide an informed account of activities.

Serving the public interest

We will uphold the freedom of the press the better to serve the democratic process.

We will be vigilant watchdogs of government and institutions that affect the public.

We will provide the news and information that people need to function as effective citizens.

We will seek solutions as well as expose problems and wrongdoing.

We will provide a public forum for diverse people and views.

We will reflect and encourage understanding of the diverse segments of our community.

We will provide editorial and community leadership.

We will seek to promote understanding of complex issues.

Exercising fair play

We will treat people with dignity, respect and compassion.

We will correct errors promptly.

We will strive to include all sides relevant to a story.

We will explain to readers our journalistic processes.

We will give particular attention to fairness in relations with people unaccustomed to dealing with the press.

We will use unnamed sources as the sole basis for published information only as a last resort and under specific procedures that best serve the public's right to know.

We will be accessible to readers.

Maintaining independence

We will remain free of outside interests, investments or business relationships that may compromise the credibility of our news report.

We will maintain an impartial, arm's length relationship with anyone seeking to influence the news.

We will avoid potential conflicts of interest and eliminate inappropriate influence on content.

We will be free of improper obligations to news sources, newsmakers and advertisers.

We will differentiate advertising from news.

Acting with integrity

We will act honourably and ethically in dealing with news sources, the public and our colleagues.

We will obey the law.

We will observe common standards of decency.

We will take responsibility for our decisions and consider the possible consequences of our actions.

We will be conscientious in observing these Principles.

We will always try to do the right thing.

II. PROTECTING THE PRINCIPLES

No statement of principles and procedures can anticipate every circumstance that may arise. Fundamental principles sometimes conflict. Therefore these recommended practices cannot establish standards of performance for journalists in every situation.

Careful judgment and common sense should be applied to make the decisions that best serve the public interest. The best decisions are obtained after open-minded consultations with appropriate colleagues and superiors – augmented, when necessary, by the advice from Newsquest’s in-house legal adviser or appointed external legal advisers, and if appropriate from independent outside experts or others whose views in confidence may provide clarity in sorting out issues.

Here are some recommended practices to follow to protect the Principles. This list is not exhaustive. There may be additional practices – implicit in the Principles or determined within individual newsrooms – that will further ensure credible and responsible journalism.

Ensuring the Truth Principle

Newsgathering by subterfuge can be justified in certain circumstances, where it is necessary in order to expose the truth, but only where it serves the public interest and otherwise complies with the Editors’ Code of Practice. (Always consult Newsquest Media Group Legal and the guidance on covert activities before embarking on such action).

In our general dealings however:

We will not lie.

We will not misstate our identities or intentions.

We will not fabricate.

We will not plagiarize.

We will not alter photographs to mislead readers.

We will not intentionally slant the news.

Using unnamed sources

The use of unnamed sources in published stories should be rare and only for important news. Whenever possible, reporters should seek to confirm news on the record. If the use of unnamed sources is required:

Use as sources only people who are in a position to know.

Corroborate information from an unnamed source through another source or sources and/or by documentary information.

Inform sources that reporters will disclose sources to at least one editor. Editors will be bound by the same promise of confidentiality to sources as are reporters.

Hold editors as well as reporters accountable when unnamed sources are used. When a significant story to be published relies on a source who will not be named, it is the responsibility of the senior news executive to confirm the identity of the source and to review the information provided. This may require the editor to meet the source.

Make clear to the reporters and to sources that agreements of confidentiality are between the newspaper and the sources, not just between the reporter and the sources. The newspaper will honour its agreements with sources. Reporters should make every effort to clear such confidentiality agreements with the editors first. Promises of confidentiality made by reporters to sources will not be overridden by the editors; however, editors may choose not to use the material obtained in this fashion.

Expect reporters and editors to seek to understand the motivations of a source and take those into account in evaluating the fairness and truthfulness of the information provided.

Make clear to sources the level of confidentiality agreed to. This does not mean each option must be discussed with the source, but each party should understand the agreement. Among the options are:

- a) The newspaper will not name them in the article;
- b) The newspaper will not name them unless a court compels the newspaper to do so;
- c) The newspaper will not name them under any circumstances.

All sources should be informed that the newspaper will not honour confidentiality if the sources have lied or misled the newspaper.

Make sure both sides understand what is being agreed to. For example:

- a) Statements may be quoted directly or indirectly and will be attributed to the source. This is sometimes referred to as "on the record."
- b) The information may be used in the story but not attributed to the source. This is sometimes referred to as "not for attribution" or "for background."
- c) The information will not be used in the story unless obtained elsewhere and attributed to someone else. This is sometimes referred to as "off the record."

Describe an unnamed source's identity as fully as possible (without revealing that identity) to help readers evaluate the credibility of what the source has said or provided.

Do not make promises you do not intend to fulfil or may not be able to fulfil.

Do not threaten sources.

Handling the agencies

These Principles are intended to provide front-line guidance for locally generated material. Wire-service material already has been edited professionally. Major news agencies set their own policies and standards for the use of unnamed sources. Smaller agencies may be less reliable. Additional scrutiny often may be required.

Being fair

Because of timeliness or unavailability, it is not always possible to include a response from the subject of a story. Nevertheless:

We should make a good-faith effort to seek appropriate comment from the person (or organization) before publication, especially where an allegation is being made against them. Remember, they may have vital information that could verify or contradict your story. And seeking a response may be essential in certain circumstances to support a legal defence (consult NMG Legal).

When it has not been feasible to obtain a response, we should be receptive to requests for a response or try to seek a response for a follow-up story.

Letters to the editor also may provide an appropriate means for reply.

Some public records or occasions (in the courts and tribunals) will identify persons accused of wrongdoing. Publication of denials is not necessary in such circumstances.

Being independent

"Maintaining independence" helps establish the impartiality of news coverage. However, news staff are not discouraged from involvement in community activities, so long as this does not compromise the credibility of news coverage. When unavoidable personal or business interests could compromise the newspaper's credibility, such potential conflicts must be disclosed to the relevant line manager and, if relevant, to readers.

Investigative reporting

Aggressive and hard-hitting reporting is an honourable and often courageous way of fulfilling the media's moral duty as a public watchdog. It is encouraged. But investigative reporting by its nature raises issues not ordinarily faced in routine reporting. Here are some suggested procedures to follow when undertaking investigative reporting:

Involve more than one editor at the early stages and in the editing of the stories.

Question continually the premise of the story and revise accordingly.

Follow the practices outlined in the use of sources.

Document the information in stories to the satisfaction of the senior editor.

Have a "fresh read" by an editor who has not seen the material as you near publication. Encourage the editor to read it sceptically, then listen carefully to and heed questions raised about clarity, accuracy and relevance.

Make certain that care, accuracy and fairness are exercised in headlines, photographs, presentation and overall tone.

Evaluate legal and ethical issues fully, involving appropriate colleagues, managers, lawyers or dispassionate outside parties in the editorial process. (For example, it may be helpful to have a technical story reviewed by a scientist for accuracy, or have financial descriptions assessed by an accountant).

Be careful about trading information with sources or authorities, particularly if it could lead to an impression that you are working in concert against an individual or entity.

Editing sceptically

Editors are the gatekeepers who determine what will be published and what will not be. Their responsibility is to question and scrutinize, even when it is uncomfortable to do so. Here are some suggested practices that editors can follow:

Take special care to understand the facts and context of the story.

Guard against assumptions and preconceived notions – including their own.

Ensure time and resources for sound editing. Nothing should be printed that has not been reviewed by someone else. When feasible, at least two editors should see stories before publication. Complex or controversial stories may require even more careful scrutiny.

Consider involving an in-house sceptic on major stories – a contrarian who can play the role of devil's advocate.

Challenge conventional wisdom.

Heed the "gut instinct." Don't publish a story if it doesn't feel right. Check it further.

Consider what may be missing from the story.

Consider how others – especially antagonists or sceptical readers – may view the story. What questions would they ask? What parts would they think are unfair? Will they believe it?

Be especially careful of stories that portray individuals purely as villains or heroes.

Beware of stories that reach conclusions based on speculation or a pattern of facts.

Protect against being manipulated by advocates and special interests.

Consider these questions: "How do you know? How can you be sure? Where is the evidence? Who is the source? How does he or she know? What is the supporting documentation?"

Watch carefully for red flags that give reason to be sceptical of news-gathering or editing conduct.

Don't be stampeded by deadlines, unrealistic competitive concerns or peer pressure.

Ensuring accuracy

Dedication to the truth means accuracy itself is an ethical issue. Each news person has the responsibility to strive for accuracy at each step of the process.

Be aware that information attributed to a source may not be factually correct.

Be sure the person quoted is in a position to know.

Always do your best to put an allegation to the person or organisation you are accusing. They may have a simple explanation which casts the story in a different light.

Be especially careful with technical terms, statistics, mathematical computations, crowd estimates and poll results.

Consider going over all or portions of an especially complicated story with primary sources or with outside experts. However, do not surrender editorial control.

Don't make assumptions. Don't guess at facts. Asking the person next to you is not "verification" – he or she could be wrong too.

Improve note taking. Consider backing up your notes with a recording device when ethically and legally appropriate.

Be wary of newspaper library clippings or the internet, which may contain uncorrected errors.

Develop checklists of troublesome or frequently used names, streets, titles, etc.

Understand the community and subject matter. Develop expertise in areas of specialized reporting.

Re-read stories carefully after writing, watching especially for errors of context and balance as well as for spelling and other basic mistakes.

Use care in writing headlines. Do not stretch beyond the facts of the story.

Follow a simple rule on the copy desk to double-check the accuracy of headlines: "Find the headline in the story." (For example, if the headline says, "Three die in crash," go to the story and count the dead and be certain they died in the crash.)

Correcting errors

When errors occur, the newspaper has an ethical obligation to correct the record and minimize harm.

Errors should be corrected promptly. But first, a determination must be made that the fact indeed was in error and that the correction itself is fully accurate. There is sometimes a risk of replacing an error about one person with a libel about someone else. (Consult NMG Legal if necessary).

Errors should be corrected with sufficient prominence that readers who saw the original error are likely to see the correction. This is a matter of the editor's judgment. But a regular errors spot is recommended.

Although it is wise to avoid repeating the error in the correction, the correction should have sufficient context that readers will understand exactly what is being corrected.

Errors of nuance, context or tone may require clarifications, editor's notes, editor's columns or letters to the editor.

When the newspaper disagrees with a news subject about whether a story contained an error, editors should consider offering the aggrieved party an opportunity to express his or her view in a letter to the editor.

Corrections should be reviewed before publication by a senior editor who was not directly involved in the error. The editor should determine if special handling or legal advice is required.

Errors should be corrected whether or not they are called to the attention of the newspaper by someone outside the newsroom.

Factual errors should be corrected in most cases even if the subject of the error does not want it to be corrected. It is the newspaper's duty to provide accurate information to readers. An exception may be made for trivial errors or when the correction of a relatively minor mistake would result in public ridicule or greater harm than the original error.

Newsroom staffers should be receptive to complaints about inaccuracies and follow up on them.

Newsroom staffers have a responsibility to alert the appropriate editor if they become aware of a possible error in the newspaper.

Communication

It is the responsibility of the local Managing Director and the Editor to communicate these Principles to staff.

NMG Legal

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