

8th Annual Report to IPSO: 2021

Landor LINKS

Introduction: Landor LINKS

Landor LINKS is an independent knowledge-networking specialist whose activities focus on the transport, urban planning, traffic management and electric vehicle sectors. The company was founded in 1989 and is acknowledged as a sector leader.

Our audience is a professional one, spanning policy-makers and practitioners in central, regional and local government, the private sector, academia and various institutions and other bodies.

Titles/products:

The current core Landor LINKS news publications are:

Print

- Parking Review
- EVolution Magazine
- Occasional supplements to the magazines above
- One-off reports and directories

Online

- LTT (Local Transport Today)
- EVolution Magazine

Apps

- Local Transport Today
- Parking Review

Besides publications, our activities include running events and providing online information services.

Responsible person:

Rod Fletcher, Managing Director, Landor LINKS

IPSO report prepared by:

Mark Moran, Managing Editor, Landor LINKS

Correspondence contact:

Irina Cocks, Company Secretary, Landor LINKS

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Learning **I**nformation, **N**etworking and **K**nowledge **S**haring

Company Registered in England No. 02346104

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Editorial standards

Landor LINKS prides itself on being expert, authoritative and independent. The team of in-house editors are all long-term employees, while the freelance correspondents, sector contributors and columnists we work with are all experts in their fields.

The Landor LINKS approach is to report on the sectors we cover in an impartial and independent manner. Our editors write news, analysis, features and diary items based on engagement with primary sources, discussions with experts in the field, attendance at events, etc.

Our editors are in regular contact with each other and will act as sub-editors for one another where required.

Fact checking

The news stories and features that our editors produce are drawn from a wide variety of sources:

- Primary research
- Interviews
- Press releases
- Press conferences
- Seminars.

Interviews

When conducting interviews, either on the phone, in person or via correspondence (Q&As, etc.) interviewees are always made aware that what is discussed is available for publication unless specifically stated as being off-the-record. Editors will, where requested, check back quotes and figures cited, but always retain the final edit of interviews. The editors are encouraged to retain notes, audio recordings, emails and correspondence relating to work in an orderly fashion.

Secondary sources

Where press releases or other media form the starting point of a story, every effort is made to corroborate facts and cite sources.

Editorial etiquette

The editors understand and respect:

- Embargoes
- Chatham House Rules
- Attribution of third parties.

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Complaints handling

The nature of publishing means that stories will generate requests for clarifications and corrections as well as formal complaints. These will be made in the form of emails, phone calls and letters sent directly to the relevant editors or to the company.

Where a complaint is made, the relevant editor is tasked with establishing the nature of the complaint. It is often the case that a conversation or personal correspondence resolves the issue. Sometimes the complainant is content with: writing a letter for publication; seeing an amendment made to the story online; or, if in print, a clarification/correction printed in the next available issue.

However, where a complaint holds the potential, however remote, to result in a legal claim that complaint will be referred to the Managing Director. This will enable a suitable response to be discussed and acted upon.

Where a complaint is initially made using terms such as 'I have been libelled', or seems likely to escalate, the relevant editor will alert both the Company Secretary and Managing Director who will refer the complaint to our insurer's legal advisors.

Once a complaint has involved the Company Secretary and, by extension, our insurer, a formal record is kept. We have also made the editorial team aware of IPSO's guidelines on keeping original copies where there have been complaints about online content.

During the period this report covers (2021) there have no instance that have required us to contact our insurer, but we have sought independent legal advice in relation to a copyright claim (See next page.)

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CASE STUDY: Online image - Copyright payment claim

One issue that has led to correspondence with a third party relates to a claim lodged by a German law firm acting on behalf of a person residing in the UK claiming ownership of an image used in 2017 to illustrate an online story.

A significant five-figure claim was made by the law firm, together with a threat to launch litigation in a German court unless the claim was paid. The fee that was being claimed was calculated using a scale of fees published by a German photographers' guild – The Mittelstandsgemeinschaft Foto-Marketing (MFM). In response, Landor LINKS's requested a clarification on the ownership of the image rights. We also flagged up our membership of IPSO.

We discussed the issue with the Periodical Publishers' Association (PPA), of which we are member, and also sought independent legal advice.

The disputed image was taken down while an internal investigation was conducted. This investigation concluded that the disputed image had been covered by a 'Creative Commons' license when selected and posted. Checks revealed that the image was still available, and being used, under Creative Commons terms. We also discovered that the image appeared in some contexts credited under the name of a person other than the claimant represented by the lawyer.

Further research indicated that the law company contacting us often issues claims against non-publishing businesses for use of images and advertises its success in extracting payments from such companies. Such payments seem to relate to alleged breaches of 'Cease & Desist' declarations signed by the businesses, which all appeared to be within the EU. Landor LINKS had declined to sign a 'Cease & Desist' form as we were keen to understand and resolve the issue.

Landor LINKS provided the results of our investigation to the alleged rights holder's lawyer. We also pointed out the ambiguities in the image's provenance. However, as an act of good faith, and being a professional publishing organisation, we offered to pay a reasonable reproduction fee should the image's provenance be proven.

Over a period of months, we received succession of claims letters from with an escalating cost attached and references made to the prospect of court action. The offer of a reasonable payment offer should our request for clarification of the image's provenance has not been taken up.

It has now been several months since we heard from the legal firm. However, following our investigation we are confident that due process was followed regarding checking the status of the image at the time it was selected. We are treating this as an 'open' case and can provide an update in due course.

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Guidance and information

Our membership of IPSO is signalled via use of the updated 'IPSO Regulated' logo on the contents pages of three journals – Local Transport Today (LTT), Parking Review and new launch EVolution Magazine (which covers zero-emission vehicles).

Should a complainant's initial concerns not be resolved they will be informed of our membership of IPSO.

Editorial guidance from IPSO

Landor LINKS has not yet needed to seek pre-publication guidance from IPSO. However, our journalists have been informed that they can contact IPSO if they need guidance before publication, on the Editor's Code or on public interest exceptions.

However, we have taken note of the positive feedback to our previous reports to IPSO and have included suggested improvements in subsequent reports.

The IPSO Editor's Guide

Landor LINKS circulates the IPSO Editor's Code (esp. when updated) to all editors and regular writing staff, as found at:

<https://www.ipso.co.uk/editors-code-of-practice/>

The editors are aware of IPSO and can study advice, rulings and case notes online.

We have also provided them the link to the IPSO helpline as found at:

<https://www.ipso.co.uk/IPSO/contactus.html>

Online content

We ensure that editors are responsible for signing off printed materials and posting online content. The editorial team has also been made aware of IPSO's recommendations on handling complaints about online content, including the need to retain a copy of the original online content.

We have asked editors to take note of copyright issues flagged up by the recent claim. However, following our investigation we are confident that due process was followed regarding checking the status of the image at the time it was selected.

Transparency

Landor LINKS is an independent publisher working in professional fields. Independence and public service approach are key to our reputation in the sectors in which we operate. Where a journal carries a commercial supplement, this is flagged up as either a 'sponsored supplement', 'paid content' or 'advertising feature'.

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Our record on compliance

Landor LINKS continues to have a good record, with no complaints requiring arbitration via IPSO being made since we joined the organisation.

Details of any complaints against the publisher that have been ruled on by IPSO's Complaints Committee over the period:

There were none during 2021.

Details of the steps taken to respond to any adverse adjudications by IPSO over the period:

There were none during 2021.

Details of any other incidents in relation to which the publisher accepted that it had breached the Editors' Code, or which otherwise raised significant concerns about compliance with the Editors' Code over the period, and details of the steps taken to remedy these concerns:

There were no such incidents during 2021.

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Our training and awareness processes

Landor LINKS continually reviews the skillsets of its staff and the training needs of the company. Where a member of staff expresses a need to update their skills, we work with them via our Personal Development Plan approach to HR.

The move to home working during pandemic initially presented challenges in terms of team working, but Landor LINKS has established weekly company meetings and encouraged the use of MS Teams to allow project teams to keep in touch.

Experience and mentoring

Our editors and contributors are well established within their fields. Our editors – who act as gatekeepers – have a good working knowledge of journalistic standards. They share experience and concerns with one another and also communicate this to newer staff and freelance contributors.

Courses

Several of our editors have undergone formal NCTJ approved courses and have attended courses on sub-editing, media law, online working and feature writing at London College of Communications and similar bodies. Editors also encouraged to keep up to date with bulletins, events, seminars and webinars produced by organisations such as the Periodical Publishers' Association (PPA), the Society of Editors and publishing trade events.

Via corporate and individual memberships, the company and its editors can draw on guidance published by professional organisations such as:

- The Periodical Publishers' Association (PPA)
- The Society of Editors (SoE).

One of our editors is a member of the PPA Digital Policy and Regulation Forum.

Our senior editors subscribe to press trade publications including:

- UK Press Gazette (online)
- In Publishing (print and online).

Key announcements and trends spotted in these are shared informally.

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DISCUSSION POINT: Webinar content

One issue that we have been discussing internally relates to the status of our growing webinar portfolio. This evolved in the period when ‘in person’ conferences could not happen. While IPSO adjudicates on print and web content, it is our understanding its remit does not extend to online presentations.

Besides live presentations and debates, webinars do present written/editorial material in the form of slides, as well as video clips.

The webinars are often made available in a recorded format to be downloaded either to registered users or on an open basis.

Landor LINKS applies print editorial principles and its editorial staff, who often produce webinars, are allowed the same autonomy and given overall authority to have ‘the final word’ on quality and content. However, much of the content – spoken and visual – will be produced and presented by third parties in the form of invited speakers and panellists.

The status of online content, and specifically how to respond to complaints made about them, may be something IPSO would like to address and provide guidance on in the future.

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APPENDIX: Manuals, codes and guidance used by editors

The company has invested in current editions of the following standard texts, which are held by our senior editors:

- McNae's Essential Law for Journalists (24th Edition) – Mike Dodd & Mark Hannah
- The Economist Style Guide (12th Edition)
- Essential English for Journalists, Editors and Writers – Harold Evans